

FRONT: THE RESP SWINDLE • 4 / MUSIC: MUCH DOES EDMONTON • 31 / FILM: THE DREAMERS • 35

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

FEB 19 2004

VUEWEEKLY

CHOREOGRAPHER **DANIEL LÉVEILLÉ**
TALKS ABOUT HIS ALL-NEW, ALL-NUDE DANCE PIECE

FREE

No. 435 / FEB. 19 - FEB. 25, 2004
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AMOUR, ACIDE ET NOIX

[BY JOSEF BRAUN • 41]

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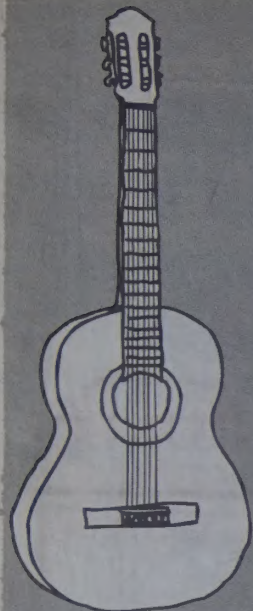
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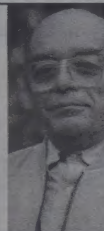
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ON THE COVER

The most notable thing about Montreal choreographer Daniel Léveillé's new work *Amour, Acide et Noix* would seem to be the fact that the dancers perform the entire piece in the nude. But as Léveillé told Josef Braun, the nudity was the last thing he added to the mix; to him, the piece is more about stillness, loneliness and the inevitable passing of the years • 41

FRONT

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MUSIC

MuchMusic in Edmonton: love or lip service? • 31



FILM

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Can't get no RESpect

Tory educational subsidy funnels money to where it'll do the least good

By SHANNON PHILLIPS

It feels like a gimmick worthy of smarmy K-Days peddlers—I can almost feel the film of Craven A smokes and deep-fried pork products on my skin when I read about it. The Alberta Tories, that band of overfed carnies and potbellied philistines, have got a real deal in store for those of us shopping for some book learnin'. As the spring sitting of the legislature convenes this week, Albertans will step right up to all manner of "knowledge economy" and "education opportuni-

ties" rhetoric. The centrepiece swindle: a Registered Education Savings Plan.

There are gimmicks that are just silly and harmless (like the songwriting contest for a chest-thumping "Alberta song" for the 2005 centennial) and then there are gimmicks that are much more. Belonging to the latter category is the RESP, an insidious ruse designed to deflect attention

ANALYSIS

away from underfunding of the post-secondary system, to target financial support towards high-income families and to divert tax dollars into bank profits and private pools of capital rather than use public money for things that serve, er, the public.

Here is how the 2005 RESP program will work: for every baby born

in 2005, the Alberta government will cough up \$500 for an RESP. Then, through the years, government will contribute an extra \$100 in grades three, six, nine and 12. The total annual cost will be around \$20 million and the government hopes that the "seed" money will encourage people to make their own contributions to the savings plan over the years. If the program is administered like the federal government's RESP racket, contributions will not be tax-deductible like registered retirement funds, but the savings will grow tax-free. Therefore, on top of the \$500 and subsequent \$100 top-up direct subsidies from government, RESPs also function as a system of indirect grants, because the income generated by the RESP accumulates tax-free.

SEE PAGE 11

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Issue Number 436

February 19-25, 2004

available at over 1,400 locations

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Vue Weekly is available free of charge at well over 1,400 locations throughout Edmonton. We are funded solely through the support of our advertisers. Vue Weekly is a division of 783783 Alberta Ltd. and is published every Thursday.

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The bishop's life

U of A hosts
Chiapas activist
and nonviolence
advocate Samuel
Ruiz García

By JOSEF BRAUN

We cannot find our own way if we are not searching for the way of the others as well."

Bishop Samuel Ruiz García cites this Bible quote frequently. A commentary on both selfishness and ignorance, it summarizes the spirit behind Ruiz's lifelong dedication to causes like human rights awareness, nonviolence, social justice and cultural preservation about as well as any single dictum can. What's revealing about this choice of words is that it doesn't simply advocate acts of altruism—Ruiz is perhaps too much a realist for that—but implies that our survival, spiritually if not physically, depends on our ability to struggle as well as to live in harmony with others.

On Thursday, February 26, Bishop Ruiz, president of the Oscar Romero International Solidarity Secretariat and the Fray Bartolome de Las Casas Human Rights Center, will be the sixth speaker in the University of Alberta's annual Visiting Lectureship in Human Rights, a series established in 1998 with the visit of Desmond Tutu. When I found out about Ruiz's coming trip to Edmonton and appeared to have lined up a telephone interview, I immediately e-mailed a friend of mine who makes video documentaries of rare indigenous rituals in Yucatan, the Mexican state to the north and east of Chiapas, where Ruiz was bishop from 1959 to 1999. "You have been given a great honour," my friend wrote back. "I've been trying to contact Don Samuel for years."

Unfortunately, it may be years before I actually get in touch with

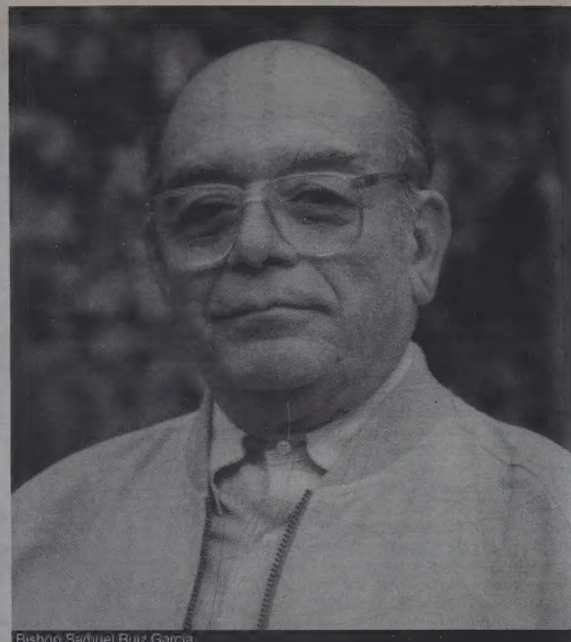
Don Samuel again, because his busy schedule and some miscommunications about our appointed interview time prevented me from speaking to him for more than a few minutes as he was leaving his home in Quere-taro. Nonetheless, I was struck by how robust he sounded for a 79-year-old man and by his cheerful, clipped Spanish. We exchanged a few pleasantries and apologies (his repeated a couple of times so I could catch it all with my patchy Spanish) and then he had to leave.

THE FACT that our interview could not be completed was not exactly a great surprise to me, nor would it be to anyone who knows how many commitments Ruiz carries or anyone who's spent time in Chiapas, a devastatingly poor state (though rich in resources) with a history of chaos, mismanagement and utter neglect from the federal government. It's a commonly held notion that "the revolution did not succeed in Chiapas." After the revolution began in 1910, the political structures shifted

EVENTS

dramatically all over Mexico, but, as Carlos Fuentes explains in *Nuevo Tiempo Mexicano*, "Not only did the oligarchy not return the land to the campesinos, but it was further taken away from them, inch by inch, to benefit the cattle ranchers, landowners and loggers who exploit Chiapas as if it were a colonial reserve."

It should also be said that Chiapas is simply one of the most magical places I've ever been, one of strange and varied topographical wonders, enigmatic but friendly people, and a complex, profoundly moving sense of cultural tradition, ecological interests and history. Yet the life of most *chiapanecos* outside of the busy capital of Tuxtla Gutierrez, many of whom are among the poorest people in



Bishop Samuel Ruiz García

Latin America, is one of virtual invisibility, racism and repression. At the time of Ruiz's appointment, labourers, who constituted well over half the state population, received slightly more income in one month than I'll make for writing this article. (I'll leave the guesswork on that one up to you.) Moreover, the infant mortality rate was exceedingly high and, under an official policy, indigenous peoples were not permitted to walk on the raised sidewalks but were instead restricted to the narrow streets.

In 1962, however, the Second Vatican Council began an ideological shift that was to assist the desperate young Ruiz in taking a radical new approach to his work in Chiapas. Vatican II declared that evangelism in the post-colonial age was no longer a matter of mere conversion for aid, but a means to embody the meaning of the Christian message in the history and

culture of a region. Ruiz returned from the Vatican sessions with a new tactic to help the people of Chiapas, one rooted in facilitating the cultural preservation of the region instead of wiping it away. He insisted that missionaries learn the language and cultural traditions of the place they were assigned to and that they focused on ways to grant *chiapanecos* the quality of life they were entitled to. Ruiz defended the cultural rights of the people of Chiapas, even if their rights included the rejection of the Roman Catholic model of religious life.

RUIZ HAS BEEN nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times and recently received Japan's Niwano Peace Prize. But his actions have not always made him so popular with his own government or other organiza-

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INTERNET

Running on MP3

TORONTO—It was only a matter of time, and now the recording industry has finally focused its unblinking eye on the unmitigated (and illegal) freedoms that Canadians filesharers currently enjoy.

Alleging that online filesharing has cost the Canadian music industry more than \$425 million and caused the layoffs of 20 per cent of the country's music label staff since 2000, some of Canada's largest music firms have asked the courts to order Internet service providers (ISPs) to supply the names of 29 alleged large-scale offenders, according to a report by the BBC. The legal action is being headed by the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA), encouraged by the success of a similar campaign last year in the U.S. which saw more than 400 lawsuits processed within four months.

But the first step for the music industry in cases like this is usually the hardest—in order to identify large-scale swappers, complicity from ISPs is required. Prior to the suit being filed, many of Canada's ISPs said they would aid the CRIA in the crackdown. But many of them have since changed their tune, citing privacy agreements with their customers that prevent this. Today, ISPs such as Shaw Communications are refusing to budge. "We believe that this application amounts to a civil search warrant," Shaw's chief executive Jim Shaw said to the BBC. "We intend to ask the court to preserve the privacy of our customers."

Which is precisely what ISPs did Monday at a preliminary hearing in Toronto. According to the CanWest News Service, ISPs Rogers Cable, Shaw, Telus Corp. and Bell Canada argued that they haven't had enough time to notify customers accused of violating copyrights and expressed reluctance about becoming "the music industry's detectives." Joel Watson, a lawyer representing Telus, argued that it is not the role of the telecommunications district to "hunt down" alleged copyright violators for CRIA.

After hearing the arguments, Justice Konrad von Finkenstein ordered the case adjourned until March 12, a move that should give every major filesharer more than enough time to get their music collections off their hard drives and onto burned CDs. —CHRIS BOUTET

TERRORISM

O Canada, glorious and open to terrorists

OTTAWA—It seems that you can't walk more than five steps in Canada these days without wandering into the middle of an international terrorist splinter cell. At least that's what the research arm of the Library of Congress seemed to be saying in a report issued earlier

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this week to Capitol Hill.

The report, titled "Nations Hostile to Organized Crime and Terrorism," was completed in October by the library's federal research division under the guidance of the CIA, according to the Canadian Press. Citing government studies, intelligence reports, media reports and "personal communications with regional experts," the report states that Canada, due to its overly generous constitutional freedoms and weak law enforcement has become a "favoured destination for terrorists and international criminals" looking to set up shop.

"A generous social-welfare system, lax immigration laws, infrequent prosecutions, light sentencing and long borders and coastlines offer many points and methods of entry that facilitate movement to and from various countries, particularly to the United States," the report says.

Naturally, the report has met with more than its share of criticism from our side of the border, with people quick to point out the unfairness of singling out Canada. "While we may have areas that we must continue to work on, every country has areas that it must work on in the fight against terrorism," Alex Swann, a spokesman for Public Safety Minister Anne McLellan, told CP. The Canadian Council for Refugees was a little more openly critical of the report's logic, noting that the study's association of broad civil liberties with openness to terrorism is "chilling" and "virtually totalitarian."

While the report concedes that Canada has taken steps towards toughening our anti-terrorism and immigration laws since 9/11, it casts doubt as to whether Canada has gone or will go far enough, saying that Canada's "liberal democratic identity" may hinder the adoption of further measures.

"Last time I heard, the United States was a liberal democracy too," one University of Toronto professor quipped to the *Toronto Star*. Geez, man, where have you been for the last three years? —CHRIS BOUTET

POLITICS

Uneasy lies the head...

OTTAWA—The federal Liberals continued their damage control efforts last week in the wake of Auditor General Sheila Fraser's damning report, promising to make Crown corporations more accountable to the public. In an open letter to the CEOs of all of Canada's Crown corporations, Secretary of the Treasury Board Jim Judd warned that sweeping changes would be coming to the way these taxpayer-funded companies do business.

"The government will direct corporations that fall under the [Financial Administration Act] to enact immediately by-laws that will: provide a code of conduct for all employees, the Chief Executive Officer and board members; clarify and reinforce the roles and functions of the audit committee; and mandate the audit committee to review internal control mechanisms pertaining to the application of ethics and the management of public funds," wrote Judd.

The Auditor General's report on wasteful government spending on sponsorship and advertising programs accused several Crown corporations of breaking the Financial Administration Act, laws which are supposed to ensure that the books of government-owned firms are clean. Fraser noted that five Crown corporations—the Business Development Bank of Canada, Canada Post Corporation, the Old Port of Montreal Corporation Inc., VIA Rail Canada Inc. and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police—used "highly questionable methods" that contributed to more than \$250 million of wasteful sponsorship spending in the four years of the sponsorship program (which was canceled as soon as Paul Martin took the prime minister's office).

Judd's letter also announced that a full review of the Crown corporations must be completed by September 30. As well, the Liberals are considering

extending the Access to Information Act to cover Crown books, in theory creating more public access to these firms' balance sheets.

While Judd's directives were placed in a well-circulated, on-public-display letter, many of the measures he wants to see implemented, from the codes of conduct to the review, are already called for in the Financial Administration Act when Crown irregularities are discovered. The tone of Judd's letter to the Crown chiefs was not hostile, but his conclusion featured a not-so-subtle warning that the CCs must clean up their act, because will be political hell to pay if the Liberals are embarrassed once again. —STEVEN SANDOR

NDP seeks feedback on Mazigh candidacy

OTTAWA—As battles for party nominations in ridings across Canada heat up in preparation for the coming federal election, the NDP is seeking public input on someone who might be the party's most controversial candidate of all time.

Monia Mazigh, the wife of Maher Arar, has stated her desire to run in the federal election as an NDP candidate. Despite his Canadian residency, Arar was deported to Syria by American officials in 2002 because U.S. security forces felt he had ties to Al-Qaeda. Arar claims he was tortured in a Syrian prison and Mazigh spent a year lobbying Ottawa in an effort to free him.

Mazigh, who would run in the Ottawa area, claims she's been approached by both Liberal and NDP organizers, and that the NDP had a new conference planned last week to announce her as a candidate.

But Mazigh says she's still undecided on the issue, so the NDP is handling her political future with kid gloves and has even asked its national membership for guidance. Last week, the NDP's regular electronic newsletter asked recipients to e-mail the party's HQ with their opinions on Mazigh's political legitimacy. —STEVEN SANDOR

By DAN RUBINSTEIN

It's a shame about A

"I'm discouraged by the way everyone seems to be focusing more on how to wipe each other out rather than on ending this thing. Both sides are heading for destruction unless we all give a little and redefine what a 'fair contract' means. This isn't a perfect world and we all have to stop looking for the perfect solution."

These words, written by A-Channel reporter Stacey Rishaug in her *Vue* strike diary two weeks ago, seem eerily prescient now. Last weekend, you may have heard, the bitter labour dispute at the local TV station that began back on September 17 was finally settled. The majority of workers are scheduled to return to their jobs on March 1; more than 60 people will attempt to overcome any animosity when they go back inside, joining about 35 union members who'd already crossed the picket line, while up to 10 will take severance packages instead. And as is customary when long strikes are resolved, both sides are claiming victory.

"This is a victory," Adrian Pearce, chair of the strikers' Local 1900 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, said in a Valentine's Day release. "It's not perfect, but every single union member who walked a cold picket line or was harassed by an angry advertiser can be proud of this deal. They can and will walk back into the station with their heads held high."

Strikers voted overwhelmingly in favour of a deal that will give them an immediate five per cent raise, another three and a half per cent salary hike in each of the next two years and a wage grid at the station (which they say management swore it would never offer). Looking at these numbers, A-Channel general manager Jim Haskins told the *Edmonton Journal* that strikers are actually receiving less of a raise than they were offered five months ago.

But strikes are about much more than declarations of victory and sighs of defeat, of course. Especially when they've featured several big-bucks lawsuits, advertiser boycotts, declining audience ratings, the usual allegations of violent confrontations and a parent company (Craig Media Inc.) that's reportedly looking to unload some of its money-losing TV channels, which can't be easy when dozens of workers are on strike.

It's fitting, then, that Stacey Rishaug's column was the final installment in *Vue*'s series of inside looks at the dispute. Each of the half-dozen previous commentators took one side or the other, but she made it clear that a fight to the death would serve nobody. It's too bad it took this long to figure that out. ●

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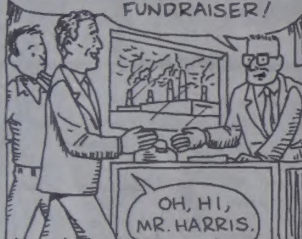
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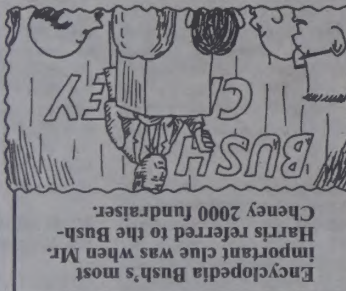
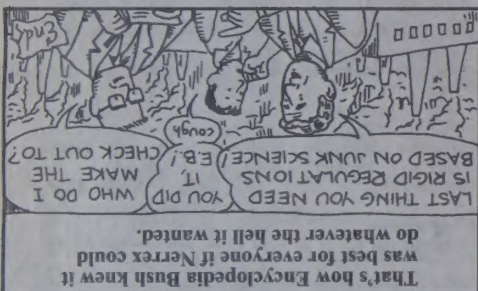
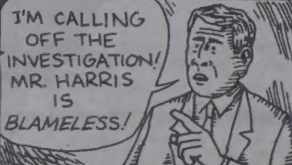


Suddenly, Encyclopedia Bush made a startling announcement.

I'M CALLING OFF THE INVESTIGATION! MR. HARRIS IS BLAMELESS!

HOW DID ENCYCLOPEDIA BUSH KNOW?

(Turn over for the solution to the Case of the Generous Polluter.)



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)
This rocket launcher
Is specially designed to
Bring peace to the world



LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)
You learn that wrestling
Is fake after making it
Your new religion



TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)
It's thinking like that
Which has made this country the
Powerhouse it is



SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)
Is it just me or
Does everyone think I should
Become the next God?



GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)
It takes a true nerd
To install a sex drive on
His home computer



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)
Give the people what
They want and surrender your
Wallet and car keys



CANCER

(June 21-July 22)
Drinking pickle brine
Sounds a lot more disgusting
Than it really is



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(Dec 22-Jan 19)
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Stan wha yer wit-cha wit-chen
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LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)
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Card games this week, sadly they're
The work of Satan



AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)
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Sugar sounds great, a spoon of
Heroin it's not



VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)
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by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com

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By RICHARD BURNETT

Family feud

It's becoming clearer with each passing day that the U.S.-based Federation of Gay Games is running on fumes and choking on the dust of the Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006 Gay Sport and Cultural Festival in the race to win the hearts and minds of gay and lesbian athletes worldwide. And quite frankly, it could n't happen to a nicer organization.

Just as the FGG appears poised to award the substitute 2006 Gay Games to Montreal runner-up Chicago next month (Montreal was stripped of the games last November after refusing to give up finan-

cial control to the FGG), Montreal organizers will announce at their February 20 press conference that they've inked a mega-sponsorship deal with 157-year-old Labatt Breweries, a company that has a long tradition of sports sponsorships.

Montreal 2006 organizers will also announce details of an exclusive deal to bring the Washington, D.C.-based all-gay GALA Choruses (which represent 200 choruses and 10,000 singers worldwide) to perform at Rendez-Vous Montreal 2006's choral festival.

As if that weren't enough to upstage the FGG, Montreal 2006 will also announce details of its International Conference on Gay and Lesbian Rights, whose all-star scientific organizing committee includes former Canadian Supreme Court Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé, South African High Court Justice Edwin Cameron, Quebec Human Rights Commission president Pierre Marois and Joke Zwiemel, Dutch deputy to the Parliament of the European Union and president of the European Gay and Lesbian Parliamentary Assembly.

In other words, Montreal 2006 is kicking ass while anti-Montreal FGG

members just want to kick my ass. That's because last month in this column I declared if the Gay Games are the Uganda of the sports world, then the FGG is Idi Amin.

The backlash was immediate and I was deluged with e-mail. But nothing was as mean-spirited as the Gay Games discussion board on California-based Outsports.com, the popular home of gay sports jocks. "Burnett [sic] certainly confirms by what he says who is running the show in Montreal—the greed-heads—who certainly owns [sic] the publication for which he writes!" one reader wrote, noting later, "All this is so reminiscent of the old boozy politics of the bar-and-bath era—grandiose plans, nasty control queens and event fiascos."

Another reader posted, "Please DO NOT take anything seriously written by Richard Burnett. His column is the bane of every literate and educated homosexual in [Canada]; he doesn't do his homework, he is a stunningly bad writer and his facts are not supported. You would think from his column that he invented Pride (in the same way Al Gore invented the Internet, maybe) and that Montreal

was the first city ever to hold one."

But wait, there's more: "As far as sport is concerned, Burnett is out to lunch. He loves the Expos, notwithstanding their terrible record and always imminent financial ruin and has never once in my knowledge written about the GLBT sports community in Montreal, which is huge and active. I'm not sure who he has spoken to about the great failure of negotiations, but he has no idea of how very divided people are."

Well, all I can say is the FGG had better call off their pit bulls before they lose their last shred of credibility.

In fact, I was one of just two journalists to meet with Paris-based FGG co-president Roberto Mantaci when he flew into Montreal last month for the founding meeting of a new international sports body being pitched to replace the FGG. Unsurprisingly, Mantaci was refused entrance (albeit politely) at the door. But we spoke for over an hour at a Montreal café and he came off as sincere and truly sorry the world gay-sports movement has come to this.

Mantaci still believes Montreal unfairly walked away from negotiations

that dragged on for two years until their split with the FGG last November. "Accepting a bid doesn't mean we have to accept every single thing in their bid," Mantaci said. "Otherwise we could have signed the contract the day after Montreal won the bid."

But Mantaci admits the FGG has learnt its lesson and will be more specific before awarding any future games. For their part, Montreal organizers say they've moved on—they have a festival to organize and their well-oiled machine is revving to go.

But on the street, athletes fear the split will foster anti-Americanism. Pundits predict the world will attend Montreal and Americans will attend Chicago. But already Team New York has joined Teams Toronto and Vancouver by announcing they too will attend Montreal.

Next month, former Canadian Olympic gold medalist and Montreal 2006 co-president Mark Tewksbury embarks on a tour to shore up international support. And when early registration for Montreal's games begins this June 1, the FGG will again find itself outclassed and out of their league. ●

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By DARREN ZENKO

5K work week

We never really thought about it when we were down there in the rumpus room, wrangling that half-broken black rubber joystick (didn't Atari realize the sheer animal torque an adrenaline-juiced nine-year-old eager to make his steer-roping cowboy go faster could apply to a four-inch plastic rod?), but those cartridges were amazing feats of programming, immersive entertainments crammed into digital spaces so tight it's hard now to believe. We were kids! Unless we were from the "gifted" class, we didn't know. Besides the fact

that videogames ruled, all we knew about them were a few odd factoids that we could bust out to maybe look smart: "This cartridge? It's 4K.... That's, like, 4,000 bytes, man. It's rad."

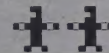
Here's Alan Miller, one of the key asskickers at Activision (makers of the of the best Atari games, games so good these dudes quit their jobs and started a new company so they could proudly print their names on the box) talking to *Creative Computing Video and Arcade Games* in 1983 about his marvelous expression of the game of tennis:

"Our programs in the early days were only 2K programs. We have recently gone to the 4K size because the expectations for videogames have risen dramatically over the past year or two. Tennis is still in 2K—I did a lot of crunching. I compressed my code, optimized it for space and was able to put in five running graphics for the players and several different pictures of a swinging racket. This was in contrast to only two pictures of running graphics in *Basketball*."

Come on and say "Holy shit" with me; this guy shoved a fully animated and fun-to-play tennis game, complete with a drop-shadow under the ball ("It turns out to be a very trivial task to add it on the VCS," he told V&A, but still), into a cartridge with an onboard memory half the size of that required to contain a Microsoft Word file containing only the words "Fuck you"? Maybe I'm a little stoned, but that's pretty cool. And in this memory-glutted Golden Age of high-quality multi-megabyte porno movies streaming instantly to cellular telephones, not everyone's lost sight of the coolness of this ability to economize.



Level: 2
Score: 120



Pixel Ninja, in all its 5K glory

That's where the 5K Contest comes in. Though the contest has since been taken under the aegis of the Association for Computing Machinery's mighty SIGGRAPH (special interest group: graphics), the old website at www.the5k.org remains the discerning digital miniaturist's one-stop shop for marvelous feats of microscopic Web-based programming. There lies an archive of contest entries, winners and losers, organized in several useful ways, from the frivolous to the purely functional, from cheap jokes to sharp wit, all under 5,120 bytes. There's a 5K Web browser, for example, and a 5K program that allows you to create stock action-movie storyboards, fully animated. There are enough pretty toys and elegant diversions to kill 100 lunch hours. And there are many, many games. It's the games that primarily concern us, and there amid the numerous tiny *Tetris*es and *Soko-Bans* are a number of ingenious titles.

The flagship is probably *Wolfenstein 5K*, a 3D first-person shooter packed into 5,119 bytes. Maybe it's not the deepest game out there, but it is a postage-stamp Web application that features a twisty maze of brick walls populated by homicidal happy-faced guards (and their scattered first-aid kits) who want our hero dead, his shotgun silenced forever. Never will these grinning grenadiers allow their master's evil plan to be disrupted by any mere princeling, no matter how strongly the Christ Bloodline flows in his veins!

Okay, maybe I'm filling in the blanks a little, but that kind of imagination is what games used to require, whether you were making fart-noise bodychecks in Activision's *Ice Hockey* or trying desperately to entertain yourself while playing *E.T.* Besides, you should see the backstory I came up with for *Pixel Ninja* (5,075 bytes); that little black-clad stack of lethal squares has some serious issues with those damn guards. ☹

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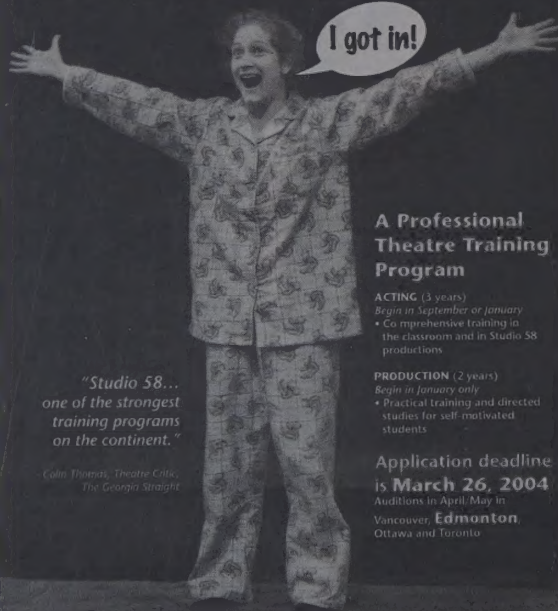
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Bishop Ruiz García

Continued from page 6

tions of power in Mexico, especially in the last decade as growing awareness of the struggle for identity and justice in Chiapas has spread beyond Mexican borders. Ruiz has had multiple attempts made on his life and the lives of those around him by emissaries of these powers; in 1997 his own godson came looking for Ruiz one day at the cathedral in San Cristobal and, when he couldn't find him, wound up beating Ruiz's sister nearly to death with a hammer.

After the Zapatista National Liberation Army's historic uprising in January 1994 (timed to coincide with the activation of the NAFTA treaty), Ruiz acted as mediator between the EZLN and the Mexican government, helping to agree upon a ceasefire. This soon gave birth of CONAI, the National Mediation Commission (with Ruiz serving as president), an organization built specifically to negotiate peace and reconciliation between the Zapatistas, the Mexican government and military and the indigenous peoples of Chiapas. Subcomandante Marcos himself said of Ruiz, "If peace can be brought to our land, it is no doubt thanks to the efforts of the national committee.... We offer our sincere respect to the sacrificing activities of [CONAI], but most of all to Bishop Samuel Ruiz." ☹

Bishop Samuel Ruiz García speaks at the Myer Horowitz Theatre on Thursday, February 26 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$10 and are available at TicketMaster.

IN THE BOX

The Elephant and Castle on Whyte's

BY DAVID YOUNG
AND JOHN TURNER

The last week for the Oilers saw another mixed bag of results. The Oilers beat the Atlanta Thrashers 5-1 in Edmonton, lost 3-0 in Minnesota, tied Nashville 2-2 in Music City and lost to the Detroit Red Wings 2-1 at the Joe Louis Arena. But really, all that pales in comparison to the brawl at Rexall. Hey, goalies fought!

John: Last Wednesday Oiler fans witnessed one of the most entertaining games ever played here in Edmonton. So much was written about the brawl against Atlanta that I won't bother going over the details but I will admit that it was the first time I've ever seen a live line brawl. The players can strike as long as they want because now I've seen everything hockey has to offer. A great deal was also said about how an incident like that can pull a team together—and if there was ever a time the Oil could use a spark, it's now. But the next three games showed how little impact the Atlanta win had on this team.

Dave: It's too bad the fight didn't happen sooner. With Atlanta netminder

Pasi Nurminen ejected from the game after the fight against Ty Conklin and starting goalie Byron Dafeo already out with a groin injury, the Thrashers were left without a netman. But since the Oilers were already up by three goals and since there were less than two minutes left in the game, Atlanta just finished the match with an empty net. It would have been hilarious to see one of the Thrasher skaters strapping on the pads to fill the net. Seeing Mike Bishai fighting from the Atlanta bench was great too.

John: Edmonton got off to a slow start against Minnesota on Friday and they were down by two goals after the first period. They can't expect to win games with that kind of an effort.

Dave: You can't let the Wild go ahead by two goals, especially that early in a game. The team immediately reverts to Jacques Lemaire's signature style of plodding defensive hockey after gaining a lead. They tighten up like a sphincter and the excitement stops.

John: In Nashville, in one of the biggest games of the season, Edmonton put in a solid effort but could only manage a tie. And one of the hardest workers on the team, Ethan Moreau,

scored the tying goal. While watching the game I just got the feeling that Edmonton was really trying but they just didn't have what it takes.

Dave: The Oilers can lose to Detroit if they have to, but giving up points to teams like Nashville and Minnesota could end up being the games we look back on in April and realize why Edmonton isn't in the Stanley Cup playoff hunt. With 22 games left after February 20, all but two games in the middle of March are against Western Conference teams. Knowing the Oilers, the faint promise of a playoff appearance will lurk around until the last game or two of the season. Just to tease the fans with false hope.

John: There were no surprises Monday night in Detroit, either. They had another good performance but lost to the Red Wings 2-1. Maybe in a year or two, this team will be ready to compete for the playoffs but right now they just can't.

Dave: The Detroit game was nothing but a series of letdowns. First, a sure goal went upstairs to the booth and was not considered conclusive enough to count. Then Detroit scored a short-handed goal shortly after that. Then the Oilers, for only the fourth time in team history, managed absolutely no shots on goal in the second period. Zero. And then they lost. Still, Ales Hemsky played one of his better games this year. I think seeing young talents like Henrik Zetterberg and Pavel Datsyuk with the Wings reminded Hemsky of the level of play he's capable of. ●

RESPs

Continued from page 4

Tax-free money is foregone revenue—money that could have been put into the tax system by those who can afford to invest in RESPs. Tax exemptions serve to starve the public treasury, allowing governments to cry poverty any time citizens cry crumbling ceilings and high tuition.

TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS is no small amount of cash. It would have been more than enough to freeze tuition at the University of Alberta, for example, for the past two years (even accounting for inflation and the massive increases in medicine and law). But the province will likely not stop there. In order to stem criticism that the 2005 baby bonus is a bit of crass electioneering that leaves out many folks who need access to post-secondary education now, the Tories are also introducing a "bond program"—a \$100 bond giveaway for every kid under 18—totaling \$75 million. The hope is that families will also purchase bonds and that the revenue generated will go to maintenance and spaces at post-secondary institutions.

Let's say you thought you tripped and fell into a time machine and the poor government was trying to raise enough money for an assault on Normandy following years of protracted world war against the Nazis, let's put this into perspective. The province of Alberta had a \$2 billion surplus last year and a total freeze on tuition fees would have cost approximately \$40 million—half of what the bond scheme will run us. As for the rest of that money, it would seem to me that all the students who didn't have chairs to sit in this semester might have a few ideas about where it could be spent.

RESP FAQs

As part of Paul Martin's "education budget" of 1998, RESPs became far more attractive to high-income Canadians when the feds committed to direct grants to any parent who had enough money to buy RESPs. Albertans considering the wisdom of a provincial education savings program may want to consider the following:

- Between 1998 and 2001, the feds gave away almost a billion dollars in direct grants for RESPs. Foregone tax revenue during that period is estimated at \$333 million.
- 12.7 per cent of Canadian children from households who make less than \$50,000 per year will benefit from an RESP. 30 per cent of children from households with income over \$80,000/year benefit from RESPs.
- According to Statistics Canada, low-income Canadians are 2.5 times less likely to attend post-secondary education than high-income Canadians. —SHANNON PHILLIPS

Money spent on a tuition freeze is also properly targeted; the average tuition increase at the U of A was a little over \$200, double the proposed bond.

It makes intuitive sense for the government to encourage education savings. On the surface, the RESP appears to be a magnanimous gesture aimed at confronting a contemporary reality: public institutions that are starved for cash and families scraping by for the laudable goal of sending their kids to some sort of hall of higher learning. Indeed, the aptly named Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (a small "lobby" group for student councils across the country) seems to have fallen for this surface assessment, greeting the federal RESP with approval and viewing assistance for high-income Canadians as a step in the right direction. However, the more pragmatic and larger Canadian Federation of Students, which represents 450,000 students across the country, feels that RESPs inhibit government from looking at real solutions for post-secondary access, such as a national system of needs-based grants.

In this regard, the CFS has an unlikely ally in the C.D. Howe Institute, an ultra-conservative think tank that invariably prescribes private sector involvement as a panacea for all public

health and education funding shortfalls. However, even the right-wing C.D. Howe describes RESPs as a "complex and ill-targeted way of supporting post-secondary education.... [R]edevelopment of grant money would be simpler and could better improve access to post-secondary education for lower-income families.... The primary economic effect of RESPs is to add needless complexity to Canada's tax system."

YOU KNOW your government has solidly veered into the land of carnival stunts when they disregard even their ideological bedfellows for the purposes of avoiding spending money the way it should be spent on public programs—predictably and judiciously. Folks only need to look at the federal RESP record for evidence of wasted money and diversion of precious resources away from where they are most needed. One would think even fiscal conservatives would disapprove of the RESP/bond giveaway, but don't bet on it. We're likely only a year away from a provincial election and the 200-plus bureaucrats employed by the public affairs department are running the creaky Ferris wheels now. ●

Shannon Phillips is a consultant on contract with the federal NDP.

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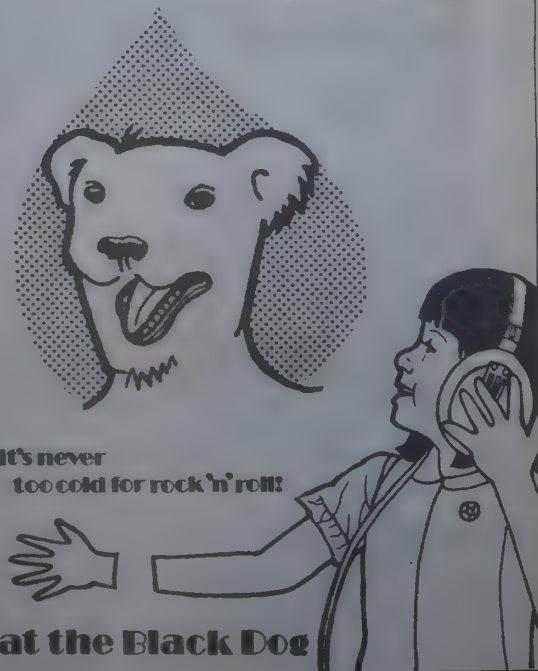
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The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring artistic depictions of fish and unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere." (Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.) Speaking of menus, I'm loving the Lighthouse's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I'd anticipated, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of stuff that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian big-eye tuna, bouillabaisse and California striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23 and I know the same bottle will run you about \$14 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate obviously isn't going crazy with the markup. Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all, which is good because I have a picklerle fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.) "That's a good choice," the server tells

me as I order the fish, prepared in a tangerine butter and served with green apple relish. The large, colourful plate features the northern Alberta picklerle, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies, either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The picklerle is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the picklerle... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 11/13/03)

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With the growing tickle in my throat letting me know sickness would overtake me soon, I decided I needed a big, spicy bowl of some type of Asian soup. Steve had heard there was a new noodle house down Whyte—and it seemed like the perfect remedy to the evil brewing inside me. The menu is packed with all sorts of standard Chinese fare and it's too bad we're just a pair popping in for a quick bite because the BBQ duck dinner for four (at what seems like a reasonable \$65.75) looks tasty. Instead, we split a few dishes: the empire chicken, a BBQ pork chow mein and, to curb my spicy soup craving, a medium-sized bowl of the seafood hot and sour concoction. The server brings me a huge pot of loose leaf jasmine tea, helping me soothe the irritation in my throat prior to the main event. The food arrives quickly, starting with the soup. This hot and sour version has your typical tofu and strands of thinly sliced Chinese mushrooms, along with peas, shredded carrots, calamari and baby shrimp in an ultra-thick, almost gelatinous broth. For the short while that the soup remained hot (temperature-wise), my throat feels much better. After getting through a bowl or two each, the

empire chicken and the chow mein arrive. The former, served on a small, oval platter with breaded chicken chunks, mushrooms, green peppers, carrots, water chestnuts, baby corns and peanuts, is supposed to be spicy. (It had the little red chilis beside the name on the menu, for Crissakes.) It's good, yes, but provides little in the way of a kick. I have to be honest—I wasn't too impressed with the chow mein platter, either. The amount of BBQ pork amongst the bok choy and other veggies looks scant and upon further digging, we find our initial assessment to be correct. I did like the crunchy noodles, however, a nice contrast to the rest of the dish. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/08/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO 10354-82 Ave • 439-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure, you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rents on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor) and the high ceiling complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwiches" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a white bean and lentil ragout but I always get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwiche), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself,



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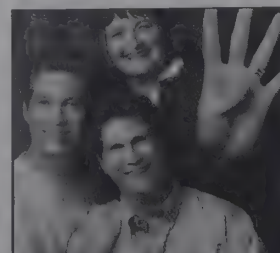
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Rising to the oc-Cajun

Celebrating a tasty non-Valentine's Day at Café Orleans

BY DAVID DiCENZO

I made a rather brave decision a couple weeks back. Well, depending on where you stand, it could be construed as a mighty stupid decision, though I've yet to feel any repercussions. (The operative word there is "yet.") My decision? I stood up and simply told the better half that we wouldn't be celebrating Valentine's Day this year. I said I had no interest in doing the usual drill for a manufactured occasion.

The surprising part was that she was cool with it. Ah, my no-nonsense gal.

I must've felt some lingering, subconscious guilt about it all, though, because there we were on Friday the 13th, racking up a decent-sized bill at the new **Café Orleans** on Jasper Ave. From what I understand, the same owners as the old mall-bound version of the establishment opened up at the downtown digs some time back in the fall. This house of Cajun goodness has a nice vibe, with blues and jazz flowing around a dimly lit, atmospheric room, complete with requisite Mardi Gras pics and a little two-seater bar for the serious beverage-drinking set.

I notice a bottle of Tabasco on each of the tables. I like that. The menu has a wide variety of standard N'awlins-style food, which always turns my culinary crank. There's a trio of Valentine's dishes available for the inevitable Saturday blitz. I pass. Principles, man. We've both got a good hunger on and maybe go a little overboard but hey, it's not a special occasion, so why hold back?

Kate starts with a spicy chicken salad while I can't take my eyes off the chicken and sausage gumbo. A cup is \$4.95 but the bowl costs just a buck more and I've always been a sucker for the upsell. I have second thoughts about the decision once the bowl arrives, but not because its contents

RESTAURANTS

weren't satisfactory—on the contrary, the thick, hearty, ultra-spicy mix was a real attention-getter, leaving my nose a little runny and my nasal passages incredibly clear—but simply on account of its size. I take a few big swigs of my Buffalo draft to combat the lingering burn. The spicy chicken salad is generally a hit, too. The crunchy candied pecans offer a textural balance with the tender, fiery chicken.

"Ooooh, it's spicy," Kate says.

"Mine too," I respond, wiping a thin layer of perspiration off my forehead.

"Well, it is Cajun," she replies.

We have plenty left over so our server brings over our handcrafted, aluminum foil take-home package. "He usually makes a duck," she says of the creative fellow responsible for the kitchen art, "but this is a salmon."

One small beef about the salad: the orange vinaigrette is on the watery side and pools up on the bottom of the plate. Still, the meal's off to a good start.

SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE of the evening, it feels as though the ceiling is caving in. We speculate wildly about what's going on until I remember that Arthur Murray's is directly above and Fridays are apparently a big night in Edmonton's dance class scene. The pounding quickly subsides and before I know it, our blackened lamb rack and rice and beans are at the table. The lamb, blackened

on the exterior and served with a small bit of a cinnamon-flavoured sauce, is awesome—tender and perfectly medium rare with that strong, distinctive taste. As for the rice and beans... well, it's not the vegetarian dish I had imagined, what with the pieces of smoky-tasting sausage accompanying it. Not that I have a problem with that. The sides of veggies and carbs aren't all that memorable but the main components of the two entrées are my bigger concern, and I'm happy with each.

We have plenty left over so our server brings over our handcrafted, aluminum foil take-home package. "He usually makes a duck," she says of the creative fellow responsible for the kitchen art, "but this is a salmon."

I'm no marine biologist (or a fisherman, for that matter) but I have to say, the back fin is bang-on.

Kate pulls her usual "give me 10 minutes" routine when we're offered dessert. I tell her it makes her come across as a little stuffy but hey, what can I say? She's got a bit of that in

her and likes things to follow her own schedule. (I secretly dig that assertiveness.) We've already decided that the bread pudding is a must, as is the case at any Cajun restaurant—

unless you're the banana Fosters type, of course. It's a relatively light and delicious version of the renowned sweet, unlike the horrible clump of dense bread I sampled a few years back at one of the more popular downtown steakhouses.

Once the last bit of sticky sauce and whipped cream is scraped from the bottom of the bowl, we're all done. Filled and pretty satisfied with the Café Orleans experience.

What a good place for a non-occasion. ●

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DISH WEEKLY

Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pommery mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

LEVA
11053-86 Ave • 433-LEVA
As soon as I walk into Leva, my eyes lock on the impressive-looking Sicilian cannolis behind the counter—I haven't seen old-school pastries like that in a long, long time. I instantly decide that after a relaxing, late afternoon bite, I'll be trying one. The main menu items are things like homemade thin-crust pizzas and tramezzini, which are grilled sandwiches. But I notice some unique items too, like the biscotti—lemon pistachio or anise-flavoured. Very cool. There's also a nice array of imported beers and Italian wines, like the Nipozzano Chianti, a fantastic choice I've enjoyed on a few occasions. I go with the chicken pesto tramezzini and ask for a side of green bean salad. Antonio, the guy who seems to run the joint, tells me they're out, so I go for the potato salad. He says I'll like it.

The tramezzini is incredible and I'll tell you why: I've had the chicken and pesto combo at other places and usually it's chicken loaf that comes with it. Not at Leva. Real, tender chicken breast, sliced thinly, combined with a tasty pesto and cheese. (I believe Antonio said it was Edam.) And the perfectly spherical scoop of potato salad is excellent—Antonio has left the skin on the potatoes, which I like, and he's mixed in a few artichokes too. He's also finished it all off with a drizzle of olive oil and some grated cheese on top. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 10/02/03)

MILL CREEK CAFÉ
9562-82 Ave • 439-5535
Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter guy asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Toma-to, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, figuring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip.

These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)

SCHÄNK'S ATHLETIC CLUB
9927-178 St • 444-2125
"The thing I love about Schänks," my friend Steve says, "is that other than the track, there's not a bigger cavalcade of problem gamblers anywhere." How prophetic. Just as we sit down in front of one of the many massive TV screens with the game on (they have the sound up for the NFL tilt as opposed to the CFL playoff game, which in a way is too bad), I can't help but notice the freakshow going on one table over. The guy in question is wearing a leather tricoloured Miami Dolphins hat, his dirty jeans are wide open and his ample gut is hanging out, and in between nervously sipping coffee, hauling on cigarettes and choosing plays on his QB1 machine, he appears to be rubbing himself down, head included, with a bottle of Absorbine Jr. But I'm more chuffed about the meager order of hot, boneless wings that we start out with. Nine bucks and there's nothing more than a handful of overdone, deep-fried chicken chunks with some hot sauce and a side of ranch. Luckily, one my superstars has already scored a touchdown so I'm in a good mood, just like the hardcore Canadian fans celebrating Saskatchewan's route of Winnipeg. The quality slightly improves with the next round of eats. I go with the peppercorn jack burger, while Steve tries the solumbo submarine sandwich. I haven't had a burger in a while, so it's a treat to sink into the big patty, which was seasoned with—get this—"course" pepper and a Jack Daniels barbecue sauce. I wonder for a second if the typo was on purpose. Nah. My mixed greens on the side have about as much spring as the Blue Bombers offence, but the crispy order of kettle chips makes up for it. The home-made chips are nice and hot, served with a bowl of a real spicy onion, cream cheese dip. It's definitely the "play of the day" in this highlight package. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 11/06/03)

SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE
15135 Stony Plain Road • 413-3379
I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smokey Joe's was conceived as a replica of old-fashioned prairie cuisine, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Samwiches" and "Young Un's Dinners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy but for a guy soon to vacate the province, it's

enough to bring a small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths—that's a nice touch. My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggieburger on the menu. "I bet you it's never been ordered," he says. Well, neither of us are gonna be the first so instead, we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smokey Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast. "We're out of wings tonight so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host asks. Deal! You get your choice of three sides with the sampler so Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. I don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained look on our server's face as she lugs out the plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There, go wild," she says. All of the homemade barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smokey Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of the meats, including jerky—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the smoked meats, the richness of the beans and the creamy potato salad make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day. **Average Price: \$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 12/11/03)

TROPICA MALAYSIAN CUISINE
6004-104 St • 439-6699
As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it—but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropikolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut

sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 10/09/03)

WHITE SPOT
3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153
True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of butter-milk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

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Loads of cred for Red, wherever you tread

BY SASHA UHLMANN

Red Mountain is the quintessential local ski hill. In fact, it's hard to talk about Red without talking

about Rossland, the town of 4,000 that supports it. Rossland, an old mining community about an hour southwest of Nelson, is nestled on a hillside in British Columbia's West Kootenays, 10 minutes from Red and just 10 kilometres from the American border.

It's nearly impossible to find a Rossland resident who doesn't ski, snowboard, telemark, snowshoe,

ice-climb—or all of the above. The town is so full of outdoor enthusiasts that anyone who shares their vigour will immediately find a home. This enthusiasm means locals take full responsibility for the goings on at Red. In the winter of 2000/2001, when the mountain almost closed due to lack of snow, the locals came in to hordes to clear natural obstacles from the runs

to keep the hill open. That same winter, two local teenage boys went missing from the hill. The town was put on hold as everyone organized into search parties and hunted for them all day and that night. The boys were found alive and well the next day (and ended up in my avalanche safety course).

Despite its seeming tranquillity, Red is one gnarly hill and hosts some of the most difficult terrain I've ever skied. It's one of the few places I know of where an unsuspecting skier can fall off an 80-foot cliff—inbounds. Steep chutes, open bowls and trees are all common terrain, which makes the skiing at Red so exciting.

RED IS ACTUALLY two mountains: Red and Granite. Red is smaller, with nice gladed sections and an old mine on one side riddled with cliff drops. Granite is the main peak and you can ski all 360 degrees of it. From the top of the Motherlode Chair, you can drop off anywhere you want depending on your ability. You can either head over to the Paradise chair, which hosts the bulk of the mountains groomed runs, or ski directly off the backside into a cliff band called Microwaves. You have to be a billy goat to get down alive, but it

can be done. An easy groomer called Long Squaw winds its way around the mountain, so that no matter where you ski down, you can always get back to the Motherlode chair.

Not only is the inbounds terrain excellent, but Red provides great backcountry access as well. Roberts, Gray and Record are peaks all within an hour and a half of easy skinning and host limitless terrain. For the right price (beer) you can get lots of info from the patrollers about safe routes, and they may even show you their favourite hits inbounds as well. (Thanks, Dano.)

As far as services go, there's a rustic lodge at the base with a cafeteria and bar and the Paradise Lodge by the Paradise Chair. The Paradise Lodge is complete with a small canteen, a barbecue and a small stove in the middle of the room to dry wet ski clothes. There are also various types of lodging at and near the hill as well as in Rossland itself.

Because of its seclusion and difficult terrain, Red may always have trouble billing itself as a family ski destination, the be-all and end-all for ski resort viability. But this, my friends, is why Red is so damn good! ●

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Ski or try!

Everybody gave 'er at Red Mountain's recent Freeskiing Challenge

By MARK RABIN

There are no safety nets or speed restrictions. There's no set course, or even major rules. It's all about the gnar—lots of it—and that's what's made freeskiing the sport it is today.

The 2004 Freeskiing Challenge, held at Red Mountain last month, is a low-key stop on the international circuit. It's a mix of good old-fashioned grassroots skiing laced with pot, beer, sleeping wherever possible, camaraderie and, last but not least, sponsorships. Most of the other stops on the tour land at bigger resorts around North America and are a lot more glam-based. But all these events attract ski bums from around the world competing for prize money (the first prize at Red was \$3,000) and results to show potential sponsors.

Most of the competitors are relatively unrecognized within the world of skiing. You'll be hard-pressed to find big names (i.e., the kind of sponsored athletes who grace the covers and glossy interiors of ski mags) taking part. They prove themselves on much larger scales, straight-

lining Alaskan peaks and taking funky ski expeditions to Russia. Circuit-based ski comps, on the other hand, are the proving ground for up-and-comers who want to be filmed and photographed, at any cost.

Ideally, freeskiing (also known as big mountain skiing) is done in bottomless powder, giving the athletes complete freedom to use all the terrain available. Drops, which geolo-

EVENT

gists refer to as "rock outcrops," can range anywhere from 20 to 80 feet. At Red, the snow was soft-packed with very little give and was quite bony in places. Typically, the snow at Red is phenomenal—the Kootenay region is famous for its light and deep powder that never gets fully tracked. A place like Whistler, for example, will get tracked out on a powder day in a matter of hours thanks to the huge volume of skiers. The Kootenays offer a slower-paced, uncrowded and

chill alternative; fresh lines can be skied weeks after a huge dump.

Unfortunately such was not the case in mid-January for competitors at the Freeskiing Challenge. Like most of B.C., Rossland was hit by that cold snap that drove temperatures down to -40°C (although later it reached the rainy pluses), pretty much wrecking that sweet, sweet Kootenay pow. But didn't stop competitors from pushing their limits.

JOINING ME for this adventure and competing in the Freeskiing Challenge was my Whistler ski buddy Ryan Bougie (who you may remember from our recent Snow Zone expedition to Cypress and Grouse Mountain). After a quick registration, we headed up the mountain to scope out Link's Run. Usually registration day is pretty relaxed, giving competitors a chance to ski the runs and get comfortable with their chosen lines. With the less-than-desirable conditions, skiers were forced to pick slightly more conservative lines. After skilling the course a



Sasha Oshin

handful of times, I was glad that I was there as media. My knees, teeth and back are worth too much!

Orchestrating the Freeskiing Challenge was an older man named Jack. "Jack's back" was his official introduction to the 100 or so competitors at the first meeting. Jack looks like a cross between Santa Claus and one of the ZZ Top guys: bald and grey with a beard that reaches his belly button, talking with a slow, half-stoner, half-southern-fried Boston drawl. He's the father figure for all the young and eager athletes and the competition's general go-to man. Alongside Jack was the head of the judging committee and crazy ski legend Jeff Holden. Together they outlined the basics of

the comp, which were a series of hilarious contradictions: (1) be safe, use your brain out there, if you go big you'll probably hit rocks or hurt yourself; (2) go big and go fast, because you'll be judged poorly otherwise. Holden, in his ultra-hip stoner ski slang, outlined the categories athletes would be judged on: difficulty of the chosen line, fluidity, aggressiveness, technique and control. "You should be stoked to shred your line," he said. "Link it together and you'll be fine."

ON THE FIRST DAY of competition, the visibility was almost nil. There was a humid fog lurking and only a

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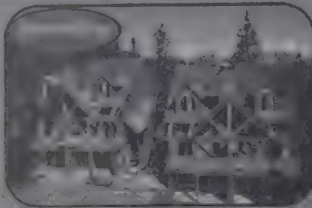


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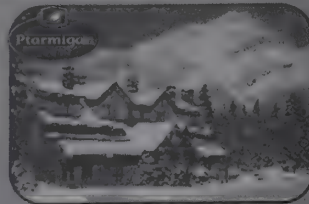
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Go tell it on the mountain

Snow Zone's crack(house) reporter gets the scoop on freeskiing—and free beer!

BY SASHA UHLMANN

For the hour-long drive to Rossland from my home in Nelson, my head was swimming with anticipation. What stars would be at there at the 2004 Freeskiing Challenge? What would the athletes be like? Would the photographers from *Powder* be friendly towards a small fish like me? Was I way out of my league trying to cover such a big event?

Wendy and I pulled up to our lodgings at 7:30 p.m. I'd lined up the place for us (and our Whistler-based associates Mark Rabin and Ryan Bougie) through an old landlord. It was called the Cube and I'd

been assured that "although it is still being renovated, it is a warm and comfy three-bedroom house."

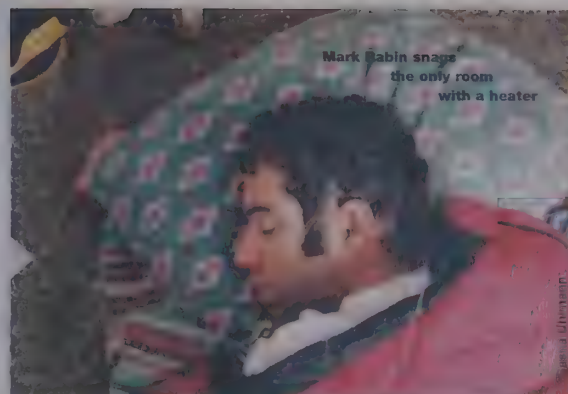
I'd describe it differently: crack-house.

There was garbage everywhere. The fridge made a noise like someone was plucking a living pigeon, crappy carpets had been thrown over the floors and a shopping cart stuck out of the defunct laundry room. The cutlery drawer contained two knives with suspiciously charred tips and the mattresses gave me nightmares without even sleeping on them. The only plus was that we didn't have to worry about trashing the place.

Wendy and I laid out our sleeping bags upstairs because Mark and Ryan had taken over the living room—conveniently, the only room with a heater. There was a note from Mark on the table informing me that I had to check in at the ski lodge as soon as I arrived, so I drove up to the hill, expecting to find a highly efficient check-in system with sponsors and

media abounding. I forgot I was in the Kootenays. There was a long line of athletes all competing for the attention of two or three overworked women. I asked one where media was supposed to go and she sighed, "Can you please come back when all the athletes are taken care of?"

Not knowing anyone, I stood back and eavesdropped on conversations. The main topic was where various athletes were going to crash for the evening. I realized with slight dismay that skiing's elite had to bum spots on the floors, just like any



other ski bum. After an hour of waiting I was finally able to check in. No media package was waiting for me as promised but my photo was taken and I was mistakenly given a four-day "organizer" pass.

That night, there was a brief meeting for the athletes and then

everyone hit the bar to cash in our free beer tickets. At one point, mid-pint, I noticed a buffet table in an adjoining room. I beelined for it but was stopped by a man who told me, "Sorry, no athletes in here." I

SEE PAGE 19

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Local

Rabbit Hill - 70cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts and runs open
Snow Valley - 70cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open

Alberta

Castle Mt. - 97-245cm base, 36cm of new snow, all lifts and 61 runs open
C.O.P. - 90cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open
Fortress - 110-134cm base, 2cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts open
Lake Louise - 124-186cm base, 9cm of new snow, all lifts open
Marmot Basin - 76cm base, 8cm of new snow, 7 lifts and 83/84 runs open
Mt. Norquay - 126-164cm base, 3cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts and 28/28 runs open
Nakiska - 83cm of new snow, 3cm of new snow, 5/6 lifts and 32/32 runs open
Sunshine - 167cm base, 25cm of new snow, 12 lifts and 107 runs open

B.C.

Apex - 149cm base, 67/67 trails and 3/5 lifts open
Big White - 215cm base, 112/112 trails and 13/13 lifts open
Chrystal Mt - 134cm base, 3/3 lifts and 24/24 trails open
Fernie - 244cm base, 28cm of new snow, 9/10 lifts and 105/107 runs open
Kicking Horse - 149cm base, 13cm of new snow, 92/97 runs open
Kimberley - 113cm base, 11cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 75/75 runs open
Mt Washington - 322cm base, 48/50 trails and 7/8 lifts open
Panorama - 104cm base, 5cm of new snow, 9/9 lifts and 120 runs open
Powder King - 297cm base, 2/3 lifts and 24/24 trails open
Powder Springs - 165-300cm base, 33cm of new snow, all lifts and 26/26 trails open
Red Mountain - 180cm base, 11cm of new snow, 4/5 lifts open
Silver Star - 165cm base, 5cm of new snow, 107/107 trails and 11/11 lifts open
Sun Peaks - 129cm base, 10cm of new snow, 10/10 lifts and 117/117 trails open
Whistler Blackcomb - 231cm base, 10cm of new snow, 33/33 runs and 200/200 trails open
Whitewater - 215cm base, 20cm of new snow, all lifts open

U.S.A.

Big Mt - 213cm base, 18cm of new snow, 8 lifts and 86 runs open
Big Sky - 203cm base, 5cm of new snow, 17/18 lifts and 150 trails open
49 Degrees - 154cm base, 20cm of new snow, 52 runs open
Great Divide Ski Area - 152cm base, 80/139 trails and 4/6 lifts open
Lookout Pass - 200cm base, 12cm of new snow, 3/3 lifts and 23 runs open
Mt Spokane - 111cm base, 10cm of new snow, 44 runs open
Schweitzer Mt - 180cm base, 7cm of new snow, 6 lifts open
Silver Mt - 152cm base, 15cm of new snow, 6/7 lifts open
Sun Valley - 182cm base, 17cm of new snow, 19/19 lifts open

All conditions accurate as of Feb 18, 2004

SNOWZONE



By JAMES RADKE

Park and ride

Before you drop into a snowboard park there are some rules you need to know. These aren't ski resorts rules or written rules, but the Rules of the Snowboard Park that every snowboarder should follow.

Most parks and pipes are for advanced riders, so stay within your ability and know your limits. When you first arrive at the park, check out its features. Don't hit any jumps; instead, check how your board is running, see if any of the jumps have changed overnight and if the snow conditions have changed. Look at the ramps, transitions and the landings to see how difficult each feature is and to determine how you want to ride it.

A spotter is important. A spotter should be waiting on each run at the crest of the landing to make sure there is no debris—or people—on the landing. If you and another person go at a jump at the same time, let the person going faster hit it. Or if you hear someone yell "My turn!" or "I'm going!" or

"Dropping in!" or voicing similar sentiments in an urgent voice, don't go until you know it's clear and someone isn't coming in behind you. It really sucks when someone isn't paying attention and cuts off your turn.

If you fall, get up! Snowboarders don't have X-ray vision. They can't see if you cleared the jump or if you're lying in a pile of snow. Once you fall, get out of the way as soon as you can. Most people don't wait that long after you before they come flying over the jump themselves. If you drop your toque or goggles, don't pick them up until it's clear. Walk around the landing to the top, then walk down the landing only when it's clear—and get out fast.

Some parks are very strict about aerial somersaults or inverted air. Don't put your heels over your head. Check each park's rules and be courteous. There's nothing worse than a rude snowboarder with a lot of attitude. ☺

James Radke is the full-time, on-hill snowboard and ski co-ordinator at Calgary's Canada Olympic Park (www.canadaolympicpark.ca)



Sasha Johnson

Freestyle Challenge

Continued from page 16

few moments of clarity all day. If the judges can't see the skier, there can be no competition. So during the few sparse breaks, the women ran their qualifying run, with the judges trying out a "split judging" technique whereby they spread out across the run and only judged the portion they could see. The men were postponed for the day. The following day, Friday, the weather co-operated and all 100 or so men skied. There were spectacular crashes, impressive lines and general craziness.

In one event, Billy Poole from Aspen did a huge backflip over the main drop, covering about 40 feet, into the mangled and moguled run. He landed it but was going way too fast for the conditions and lost it all, crashing hard into the run. No one else was psycho enough to submit their bodies to such unthinkable torture. But he did. And that's the whole essence of this sport. What

was going through his head prior to that crazy maneuver? Probably not a whole lot. Getting results so that he can secure sponsorships? Pushing the limits? Winning? How much a new knee and false teeth were going to cost? I was chatting with Poole the day before his backflip run and all I could get out of him was, "Yeah, I don't compete high anymore."

On the final day of competition, which took place at a backcountry access spot called Roberts, the conditions were fogged in and the event fluctuated between standby and give 'er nuts. In the end, Moss Patterson, by far the most solid skier in the bunch, took first place. Afterwards, the true festive, fraternal and supportive nature of the sport shone in all its glory with a full-out dance and booze extravaganza in the Red Mountain lodge. Skiers, organizers, staff, media, locals and judges all rejoiced in the spirit of living to ski and trying to ski for a living. True modern-day ski bums, not worrying about the future, living for the moment. ●

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Crackhouse

Continued from page 17

was flattered but told him I was with the press. "What press?" he asked. "Vue," I answered, expecting him to say "view who?" Instead he said, "Oh, great, come on in and grab some food. Here I'll get you some more beer."

Now that's what I'm talking about.

TURNS OUT the man I was speaking to was Jim Green, the general manager of Red and a former Edmontonian. We had a brief conversation about the future of Red Mountain, then I dove into the buffet table, followed closely by Mark. Ryan took our cue and although he was an athlete, he managed to schmooze his way around the VIP room for the rest of the evening. After a couple more free beers I decided to do some work. "I'm gonna interview some people," I exclaimed to Mark.

I borrowed some folded pieces of blank paper from Mark and a pen from the bar and set off to find an interviewee. Mark and Ryan opted to remain close to the food and drink. Let me confide something to you: I have never interviewed anyone before. Interviewing, I was soon to find out, is an art that requires composure, creativity and efficiency. I possess none of these qualities.

My first victims were a contingent of Japanese competitors. Who better to lose my reporting virginity to than a group of guys who don't speak English? I sat down with them at a table they had commandeered in a corner near the washrooms and introduced myself. I asked for their names, which was pointless because I forgot each name in turn with stunning accuracy. They knew this.

I got this much out of our conversation: they were in Canada to ski and hit the competition circuit. There is good skiing in Japan but no backcountry or out-of-bounds skiing. And yes, they do have indoor ski hills in Japan. Huge ones. Every other part of our stifled conversation was scribbled down on my paper in such a way that even I would never decipher it. They knew this as well.

I left my first interview feeling a little lame. As I walked away I heard them mutter something that I'm sure translates into "small fish."

Deflated but undeterred, I decided to get the ante and tackle someone who spoke English. I settled on a woman sitting in the VIP room, a tournament judge. I sought out Mark for moral support. He was parleying with a filmmaker and informed me that the woman I was about to interview was Lee Anne Patterson, one of the best female skiers in the world. Great.

I quickly thought of some quirky questions and went over to introduce myself. Two minutes later, my pen and paper at my feet, quirky ques-

tions out the window, I was fully engrossed in a conversation with Patterson about the pros and cons of competitive skiing. Pros: competitions help to promote the sport and push skiers to the next level. Cons: standing around for hours in foggy, hardpack conditions, waiting to huck yourself off a rock that 20 other skiers have already bomb-holed before you, all in the hopes that the judges (and sponsors) will take notice.

Patterson said she was tired of the competition circuit and has turned her energy to mountaineering. I asked her what her best ski memories were and she told me two: one was

standings, so he took off to Roberts to scope his line for the next day. (Alas, he tied for 34th and didn't qualify.) Mark and I had our fill of competition, so we went touring for the afternoon. Highlights included fresh lines, losing my shovel handle and busting two female patrollers peeing out-of-bounds.

The final day of the competition was soaked in again. I lost my crew on the first run; I looked up from buckling my boots and everyone was gone. So I decided to hike up Roberts to take photos of the competitors. I perched myself in front of a small tree island 100 metres below the drop-in point. Next to me a guy named Paul was filming the event with a movie camera. If an athlete fell on their descent, there was a strong possibility they would ram right into us. We had nowhere to escape because there were substantial drops on both sides of us. I spent the next five hours taking photos and suffocating from the stench of Paul's "road ass," as he put it. At one point, a competitor ate shit right in front of us. If it weren't for some deft acrobatics on his part, I would have been skewered by hard, fat ski. The most annoying part was that while I ducked and hugged a tree for cover, Paul kept his composure and filmed the whole thing. Yep, I'm an amateur.

That night was the final party. Mark and I were too cheap to pay the 10 bucks for dinner, so we showed up later for the music. We sneaked our canned beer into the show and boogied the night away. Wendy stayed sober enough to drive and we even gave a guy a lift back to town in the pickup. As we pulled into town he jumped out and yelled, "Hey, I'm a fireman... and there's always a bunch of alcohol at the fire station. Follow me!!!!" Say no more.

The guy led us into the station through the garage doors and brought us to the hangout area, where he pulled out a bottle of Crown Royal and some Coke from the cupboard. We then got a drunken tour of the station and Ryan got to sit in an engine and turn on the sirens. An hour later, after we drained the CR and a bottle of vodka and heard as many near-death stories from our host as we could stomach, we called it a night. The Red Mountain Freeskiing Challenge was over. ●



Sasha Uhlmann

belaying off a crevasse with two friends to ski down Mount Currie, and the other was a harrowing descent at Chamonix with another friend. In both cases, what appeared to make these moments special to her was the bonding and trust that existed between friends in extreme situations. It made me think of the skiing adage, "No friends on a powder day," and what a load of crap that is.

THE NEXT DAY the fog lifted so the men and women were able to run the course. Mark and I hung around the finish line taking photos and soaking up the vibe. I got my "money shot" of a competitor named Billy Poole completely inverted as he busted a backflip off the top of the run. Ryan nailed his run and felt he was in good

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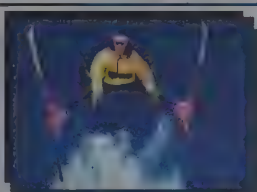
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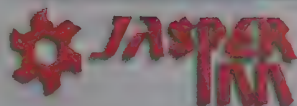
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thursday

The mighty Celtic superband who call themselves **The McDades** are putting on a big ol' show at the Provincial Museum Theatre tonight. Of course, such a venue demands that this gig be something special, which it is—the hard-working roots act is planning to use footage of the show for a forthcoming DVD. So try and be presentable, okay? Tickets are \$16 advance at TIX on the Square, Acoustic Music Shop and Myhre's Music. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 8 p.m.

friday

You can't hide from your bud—so says Chicago's **DJ Sneak**, who used that insight as the title for his breakthrough filtered house track. Tonight at Red's, the pioneering underground house jock will be dropping the kind of revolutionary grooves that have inspired the likes of Basement Jaxx, Mark Farina and Armand van Helden. Expect everything from banging Chicago beats to classic melodic disco, kids. Tickets are \$15 advance at Ticketmaster, Foosh, Underground, Colourblind and Red's. Show starts at 9 p.m.

saturday

The big show for the night is **Much Does Edmonton**, featuring Social Code, the Corb Lund Band, Les Tabernacles, Politic Live, Drive By Punch, Slow Fresh Oil and the Floor. It's also being filmed for an hour-long special to be broadcast on Much-Music in March. Tickets are \$15 at Ticketmaster, Red's, Listen, Blackbyrd, FS, Megatunes and Freecloud. Also, the Swiftys are back at the Sidetrack, while the Wheatmonkeys, Koan and Cordoba rock out at the Powerplant.

sunday

It's a punk rock fiesta at Stars as **The Wednesday Night Heroes** and the New Town Animals headline a high-decibel all-ages extravaganza. The very chic Our Mercury and the Homewreckers round off the fist-shaking festivities. And because it's all ages, doors for the show open early at 6:30 p.m. with amplification to come soon after. Check out Phil Duperron's chat with the newly reunited Animals on the next page.

monday

It's movie night again, and *Vue Weekly* would like to recommend the following music-related flicks for your rental consideration: *Empire Records* (featuring Liv Tyler, who was a babe long before all that hobbit-and-elf business), *24 Hour Party People* (featuring a spot-on impression of drugged-out Happy Mondays singer Shaun Ryder), *Stop Making Sense* (featuring David Byrne in that famous big suit) or *A Mighty Wind* (featuring **Fred Willard**—nuff said).

tuesday

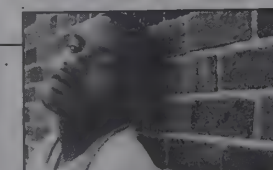
Forward-thinking indie rock is on the agenda at the Sidetrack Café tonight, with the Fine Options, Run Chico Run and the All Purpose Voltage Heroes. Then there's the fundraiser for the multi-talented **Malcolm Azania** at the Back Room Vodka Bar. Azania, who's running for a federal seat in Edmonton Strathcona for the NDP, is throwing a public bash at the Whyte Avenue hangout with music provided by Maria Dunn and Dale Ladouceur.

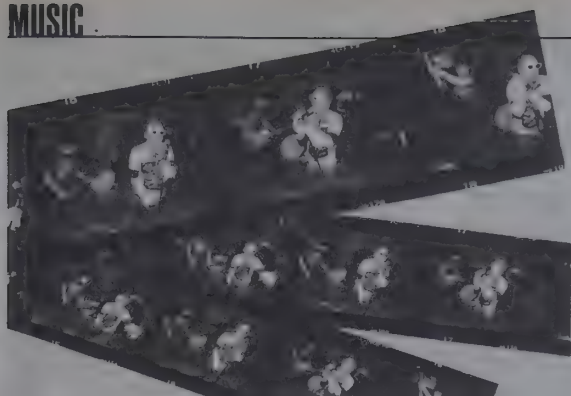
wednesday

Got some teeth? Yeah, it's a weak joke if you know who **Obie Trice** is. The Eminem protégé had a club hit late last year all about that subject, which came from his hit record *Cheers*, and now he's bringing the show to Cowboys, with up-and-coming word assassin Rochester—also known as Juice—filling in the support slot. Tickets are \$25 advance at Ticketmaster and Cowboys, and doors open at 7 p.m.

newswire

Tickets for the upcoming **Pixies** concert at Red's on April 18 go on sale this Saturday at 9:30 a.m. at all Ticketmaster outlets for \$30.... Legendary Vancouver punks **D.O.A.** will be the first act to be inducted into the Indies Hall of Fame during the fourth annual Canadian Independent Music Awards, taking place in Toronto on March 3.... *Canadian Idol* finalist **Billy Klippert** has signed a deal with upstart label Orange Records, which is distributed by Universal Music.... The children of the late **Johnny Cash** have refused to allow their father's hit song "Ring of Fire" to be licensed for use in a hemorrhoid crème commercial.... **Wilco** will release their new album, *A Ghost Is Born*, on June 8 through Nonesuch Records.... Nick Oliveri and Mark Lanegan have both left the roster of **Queens of the Stone Age**.... Beloved American indie band **The Anniversary** have broken up, according to their website.... And finally, in the much ado about nothing category, fans of **Guns 'N Roses** are irate that a new disc from the Axl Rose camp is nothing more than a greatest hits collection, due on March 23.





Animal magnetism

Vancouver's New Town Animals rejoin the herd for a new disc and tour

By PHIL DUPERRON

The story of why Vancouver's New Town Animals decided to call it quits a year ago, like most stories, has two versions.

The comedy version, according to guitarist Jeffie Pop, blames things on incestuous relations between members' wives, while the factual (if less exciting) explanation is frayed nerves after too much time spent in close quarters in the touring van. "So we decided to chill out for a little while and do our own thing," says Pop.

Fine, but why did they decide to get back in the saddle? "I would say boredom, but I wasn't actually bored over the last year," Pop continues. "I don't know—we just did it because nobody ever really stopped hanging out. It was like we just stopped playing in the band, but everybody still saw each other every weekend. It wasn't even anything weird. Vancouver's not a very big city, so unless you have some sort of strange falling out with people, you see those same people at the same shows. It wasn't like some strange transition."

But what really got the ball rolling was a planned gig with the Briefs from Seattle, who they'd promised to play with if they ever came to Vancouver. "The show fell through," Pop says, "but we'd already been practising to play it, so we just decided since we already learned all the songs again we might as well play some other shows."

After playing a few shows at home, as well as in Portland and Seattle, the Animals went back into the studio and recorded "Cori Street," which will be released right away as a seven-inch single on Longshot Music (and which can be heard at www.longshotmusic.com). An as-yet-unnamed full-length disc on Seattle's Dirtnap Records will follow later this year. Pop, who also works at Scratch Records, doesn't mince

words about why the Animals decided to put their newest song on vinyl. "Because it's better," he quips. "Everybody listens to records, so it makes the most sense to go that way." Once he's finished chastising me for not owning a record player and thinking only punks and DJs buy vinyl, Pop sets the record straight: "We sell more records than CDs," he says. "Records are cheaper than CDs which is strange because they're twice the money to make."

EVEN THOUGH the New Town Animals released their debut disc, *Is Your Radio Active?*, on Vancouver's Mint Records back in 2001, they decided this time around to head south of the border, where all the action is. "Mint is an amazing Canadian label but we're a punk rock band and they're not a punk rock label," Pop says. "So it was pretty much as simple as that. People in Canada didn't really care about us. We were doing considerably better down the west coast of the States."

There's just an amazing atmosphere for that sort of scene there and it just wasn't happening for us in Canada, so a U.S. label just seemed the logical place to go. There's potentially so many more people to hear your record."

The New Town Animals play the kind of punk that reared its ugly head in the mid-'70s as a reaction to bloated "rock" bands and disco. It's not as fast and loud as '80s punk became when it started to blend with metal and thrash; it's pure fun, the way it was always meant to be. "Rock music, for sure, has always been for the working class," Pop says. "It's entertainment for the poor. That's always what it's been. Once it got out of control it had to get grounded again and brought back to the people who would actually appreciate it again. It's not meant for some dumb-ass rich person. I don't want those people to like it and they don't want to like me. Which is totally fine." ●

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MUSIC



music notes

BY PHIL DUPERRON
AND JERED STUFFCO

Kasual elegance

The Kasuals • With Black Market Inc. and the Blame-Its • New City • Fri, Feb 20 The Kasuals started as a fun side project for half the members of Les Tabernacles to explore the depths of old-school pop-punk. Soon they picked up guitarist Gabba Gabba Jay, and then Liam Harvey Oswald decided to quit Les Tabs altogether to focus all his attention on fronting the

band. By the time they released *Hate Me on Method* Records last year, things were starting to look pretty serious for the Kasuals. Their fun and smart brand of three-chord punk was turning the ear of local promoters and they found themselves landing on all sorts of killer bills around town as well as a tour with punk legend Marky Ramone (whose Canadian tour was later canceled).

But the whole time bassist Al Camino and drummer Charleston Chewka were pulling double duty—and as anyone who's ever tried to date two girls at once knows, burning the candle at both ends always catches up to you eventually. So with Les Tabernacles furiously working on a new album, the rhythm section had to stick with the wife and dump the mistress. "After two years, we finally decided both bands were being held back by sharing the members," Oswald says. "There's a lot more chances I think both bands could have had if we weren't sharing members."

The decision to make the split was completely mutual, but even though everyone's still friends, that didn't make it any easier. "Al and I have been playing together for close to 10 years now," Oswald says. "So to be completely honest, it's gonna be really difficult to lose both members. [Chewka] and Al are probably the greatest rhythm section in Edmonton. It's gonna be the hardest thing I've ever done in a band to replace these guys, but it's something that could be good for the band as well. Y'know, if we find two guys who are 100 per cent into our band instead of 50 per cent, maybe it'll just kick our butts into going full-tilt too." (PD)

Swiftys on the uptake

The Swiftys • With Darrek Anderson and the Guaranteed, Jody Shengkarek and Gavin Dunn • Side-track Café • Sat, Feb 21 When a band member moves to another province, you'd think that it would have

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do with significantly smaller shows, including a house gig in Red Deer. "Well," Johnson explains, "there's a guy named Billy who's got a house in Red Deer, and he's a really big fan of country and roots music. We're going to go and play a small acoustic show down there. I think it'll be really fun." (JS)

Fine by me

The Fine Options • With Run Chico Run • Sidetrack Café • Tue, Feb 24 Love triangles and lasting friendships don't usually go hand in hand, but for Victoria rockers the Fine

Cassidy as they wanna be

Cassidy (CD release) • With Niceguy, Tuesday Can't Tell and Drive By Theory • Red's • Thu, Feb 26 (all-ages) As soon local emo-rockers Cassidy finished their debut disc, tragedy struck—so it's ironic that they titled the album *Improvement Through Tragedy*. While frontman Sean Welling was planning the release party, ongoing internal struggles left the band without a bass player and drummer, forcing a massive—and quick—line-up change.

"A number of stresses were build-

World, at the crossroads of several styles and genres. "We're not easily slotted into the typical punk rock kinda scene, so we're trying to break away from that," Welling says. "We've all been in the typical skate-punk kinds of bands before, so we're trying to do stuff that's a little more mainstream and a little more rock-influenced. This kinda alienates us from the punk crowd so we're striving to find that special niche for us. It's a big challenge because we don't fit in with your traditional rock acts either. We gotta find our own unique place." (PD) ●

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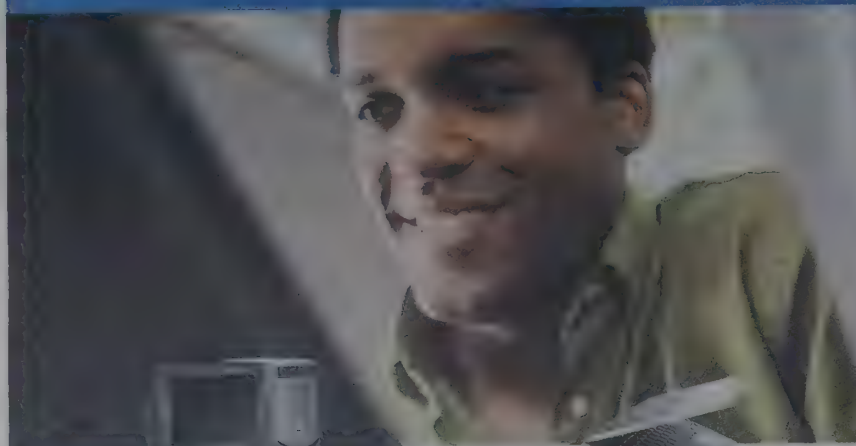
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SEE PAGE 6 AND 7 FOR ENDNOTES.

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The Floor • Seady's • Fri. Feb. 13 •
reVUE The Floor have managed to take the nostalgia winds of the '80s and make them their own. It's like watching an episode of *Clone High*, but instead of generic reproductions, they're bringing Joy Division's *Unknown Pleasures* into the 21st century. "Twenty-something rockers," they call themselves, and they sound like it. Their album *Unknown Pleasures* is a rehash of the band's 1980 debut, *Unknown Pleasures*, but it's a continuation of a musical legacy. Although there was a bit of the obligatory shoe-gazing in the capacity crowd, there were also some energetic movers and shakers up front and centre. These boys are creating quite a buzz around town these days and they should be Edmonton's next big breakout band. (PD)



PHOTOGRAPH BY PHIL BARTON

pretty serious consequences for the guys left behind. However, when Jody Johnson of local country kingpins the Swiftys picked up and moved to Saskatchewan last year, he says his relocation wasn't as traumatic as he imagined it'd be.

"I think we'd like to jam a bit more," says the bassist, back in town and gearing up for a string of Albertan dates, "but it's had less of an effect than you might think." According to Johnson, spending huge amounts of time preparing for gigs just isn't in the band's nature. "It's similar to the way we did the CD," he says. "We didn't do any preproduction or anything—we just went in and banged it out. We prefer to do things that way."

The approach seems to be paying off. In addition to winning the growing number of local fans, the band's eponymous CD also landed on CKUA's list of the Top 10 CDs for 2003 alongside releases by Blackie and the Rodeo Kings and Bruce Cockburn. Describing the response to the CD as "awesome," Johnson says the band—which is rounded out by drummer Grant Stovel and frontman Shawn Jonasson—is already busy booking summer gigs. "We're trying to restrict most of the touring to festival season," he says. "I guess that could mean all year round, since there's festivals happening all over North America, but being a new band it's been a bit of a slower start."

Nevertheless, Johnson says the Swiftys have already landed spots at folk music festivals in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Calgary, with appearances at North Country Fair, Wayne Fest and a blues fest in Ontario penciled into their schedules as well. For now, however, the band will have to make do with significantly smaller shows, including a house gig in Red Deer. "Well," Johnson explains, "there's a guy named Billy who's got a house in Red Deer, and he's a really big fan of country and roots music. We're going to go and play a small acoustic show down there. I think it'll be really fun." (JS)

Fine by me

The Fine Options • With Run Chico Run • Sidetrack Café • Tue, Feb. 24 Love triangles and lasting friendships don't usually go hand in hand, but for Victoria rockers the Fine

Options, the old adage "anything goes" sums things up rather nicely. "[Bryce Janssens] and I met after we were both trying to date the same girl," explains Fine Option member and Edmonton native Colin McKill over the phone from Victoria, B.C. "The girl ended up being bunk, but me and Colin became really good friends. He was wearing black Adidas and I was wearing white ones, so we knew that there was something there."

Despite the young men's history of romantic failure, they started writing tunes together, and after an abortive winter in Saskatoon (where McKill says the band spent "too many evenings indoors ingesting too many substances") the pair relocated to the more hospitable climate of Victoria, B.C.

"We sound what the Rheostatics would sound like if they were raised in a basement somewhere in burlap sacks and beaten on a regular basis," McKill says. Right. Nevertheless, the band (which is rounded out by Rob Kavanagh and Connor Matthews) laid the burlap sack treatment down on tape on last year's debut LP *Outer Space*, which landed them on two national tours and several regional jaunts. According to McKill, the band plans to follow it up with another release later this year—once the material has been road-tested, of course. "We're not sure if it's going to be an EP or an LP yet," says McKill. "We heard that Joel Plaskett did a tour right before he went into the studio, which makes sense because then you don't need to fiddle around with computer software to make you sound like a real band." (JS)

Cassidy as they wanna be

Cassidy (CD release) • With Niceguy, Tuesday Can't Tell and Drive By Theory • Red's • Thu, Feb. 26 (all-ages) As soon local emo-rockers Cassidy finished their debut disc, tragedy struck—so it's ironic that they titled the album *Improvement Through Tragedy*. While frontman Sean Welling was planning the release party, ongoing internal struggles left the band without a bass player and drummer, forcing a massive—and quick—line-up change.

"A number of stresses were build-

ing and it was time for them to make their exit," Welling says. But true to their CD's title, the tragedy only improved the band. "We're way happier now with the current lineup [which includes Jamie Robertson on drums and bassist Chris Yiu]. It feels like those roles in the band are finally being filled as they should have been for the last year. In a sense, recording let me really realize they weren't at the same level as [guitarist Mike Lastiwka] and I were and it was time to say goodbye to them."

In the end, having a disc ready for release made it easier for Cassidy to find serious new members, but not before a little panic set in. "Within a month we were playing shows again," Welling says. "We really bounced back amazingly fast. It was a little bit scary at first. Y'know, we were done the CD, we were ready to release it, but wait—we only have half a band now."

Not only does the disc's title reflect what Cassidy went through to make the release a reality, but it also captures the angst-ridden tone of the songs. The usual themes of doomed relationships and lost love run through the six-song EP, but there's a twist. "It almost seems like nothing good will ever happen unless you've suffered through something bad," Welling says. "I think in some ways that's almost the whole perspective of the album. I think I was also going for the fighting for peace paradox. We're all so hung up on this idea of having to suffer through things in order to improve ourselves. I was kind of playing with that oxymoron, I guess."

The band's sensitive yet edgy sound is reminiscent of Jimmy Eat World, at the crossroads of several styles and genres. "We're not easily slotted into the typical punk rock kinda scene, so we're trying to break away from that," Welling says. "We've all been in the typical skate-punk kinds of bands before, so we're trying to do stuff that's a little more mainstream and a little more rock-influenced. This kinda alienates us from the punk crowd so we're striving to find that special niche for us. It's a big challenge because we don't fit in with your traditional rock acts either. We gotta find our own unique place." (PD) ●

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DUSTERS PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch

EDGE ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) The Pharmacists Trio, 9pm

JF's Open stage with cover band

JASPER PLACE HOTEL Hugh Betts

KINGSNIGHT PUB Celtic

MARKHAM HALL Theatrical Music, Danyluk and Card, Mike Lent, Maria Dunn and guests; 8pm; \$10; tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757

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RATTLESNAKE SALOON Tera Lee

RHYTHM AND BREWS Open stage/Jam with the River City Rhythm Kings; 8:30-midnight

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Sam August

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFE Themasses, Magilla Funk Condu featuring Brett Miles, 9pm; \$8 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Monkey's Uncle, no cover

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electronic wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

RENDEZVOUS Metal Night: With DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Ladonna's Review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

URBAN LOUNGE Substance: Urban with Invinible, Spinecycle, Echo, Shortround, MC J-Money

SAVOY Funk w/Bob Trampoline and Ben

SEEDY'S Kicked in the Teeth Thursdays with DJ Lloyd

THE STANDARD 5pm Thursdays: House with Tripswitch, Nestor Delano, Luke Morrison and guests

TOMIC AFTER DARK Spring Vibration 2004: Progressive, house, disco house, trance, rare rap, hip hop with DJ Max (Russia), DJ Iya, DJ What; no minors event; 8pm (door); \$10 (before 11pm)/\$15 (after 11pm)

VELVET LOUNGE Urban Substance: hip hop/R&B end of exams jam with Spinecycle, Invinible, J-Money, Sean B

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MUSIC WEEKLY

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SEEDY'S 7 and 7 is, Traitor Where, Collapsing Opposites

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SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WHYTE) Derrick Sigurdson

SIDETRACK CAFE Superseed, The Harlots; 9:30 pm; \$6

THE SUGARBOWL The Ecclestons; 9:30 pm; \$6

URBAN LOUNGE Monkey's Uncle, \$5

YAMMERBUTTE Tidesley's Indigenous Allens; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$5 (member)/\$9 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster

ZEMAR'S ON 1ST John Goodwell Trio

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HEIN CITY LIVING LOUNGE Live Crew, Pollic Live, DJ Instigate

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

RED'S DJ Sneak, Nestor Delano, David Stone; 9pm; \$15; tickets available at TicketMaster, Red's, Foosh, Colourblind, Underground

THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro Blitz best new European music with DJ Outwack; DJ Jazzy and male stripper; Downstairs: female stripper; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

SAVOY Electronica with DJs Bryana, Chris

THE STANDARD Triple X Fridays: Top 40/dance

STARS MICHELLE MAH Floor: Live Metal Night with Brian

STONEHOUSE PUB Alternative, house, hip hop, top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Weezle; 9pm

Y AFTERHOURS House/trance with Tripswitch, Surestock, MC Flopro, LP, Juicy, Derkin, Old Bitch

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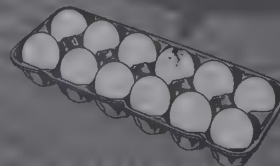
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root down

By JENNY FENIAK

A Guy thing

The Buddy Guy Acoustic Ensemble • With Kyle Riabko • Winspear Centre • Thu, Feb 19 In the space of a single 15-minute chat with blues legend Buddy Guy, I felt as though an entire generation of musicians was passing before me, like a trip through a virtual museum. The trip began in 1957 with Guy's arrival in the clubs of Chicago from his Louisiana home, and continued through his struggle to find a place for the blues on the pop-dominated airwaves. Today, one of the only places to find blues legends in Chicago is Guy's own club, Buddy Guy's Legends, which he opened almost 16 years ago.

"I'd never thought of being a club owner," Guy says. "Y'know, even up there where you at—Toronto, Montreal, back in the '60s, they had great blues clubs because that's where all we'd play. We didn't have all the outdoor theatres." (It's a treat, by the way, to hear Guy's deep, street-driven voice pronounce "theatres" as "thee-a-tors.")

"And all the great blues clubs disappeared, y'know. They're hard on drinkin' and drivin' now and crime in the streets and our public transportation don't run 'til 11 and 12 o'clock at night, which used to run 24 hours here. And the clubs was being supported and the jobs was here, y'know, with steel mills 24 hours and stockyards 24 hours. All that left and the blues clubs started leavin' and I said, 'Now where is the next Buddy Guy gonna walk in and see such as Muddy Waters and the Howlin' Wolf singin' in all those clubs like they were when I came here?' So I said, 'I'd better open a club.' Music is like babies—you crawl before you walk."

Guy's career broke into a run during his stint with Chess Records from 1960 to 1967. But even though some of his best-known songs, such as "Stone Crazy" and "Leave My Girl Alone," were laid down during those years, his own recording career was sporadic he did much of his work as a session player for artists such as Sonny Boy Williamson, Muddy Waters, Little Walter, Otis Rush, Koko Taylor and Howlin' Wolf.

Mainstream "white boys" such as Eric Clapton, Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones considered Guy's work an inspiration for their own blues-based sounds, many of which became hits, earning airtime the original versions were "unfit" for. After more than 15 years without a record, Clapton invited Guy to perform with him at London's famous Royal Albert Hall in 1989. "That's when I got signed," Guy

says. "So I say, 'Well, I gotta do like [Clapton], just move to England and they will listen to me, and come to find out my record company [Silvertone] was right here in New York.' But all they was sayin', 'Who's Buddy Guy? What's he, like 95 years old?' and all that kind of crap. And this British guy come in here and sign me and my biggest record ever was the first one I went out and recorded in London—*Damn Right, I've Got the Blues*."

Since that 1991 release, Guy's been recording and performing everywhere from festivals to late-night talk shows, earning 19 W.C. Handy Awards and five Grammys, including the 2004 Grammy for Best Traditional Blues Album for his 2003 disc *Blues Singer*. Guy insists one of the only ways to achieve mainstream airplay is to line up superstar "guest performers"—his own recent collaborators include Eric Clapton, B.B. King and Travis Tritt. He's planning to recruit other big names

such as Santana for his next record due later this year.

My sincerest Manx

Harry Manx • The Arden • Fri, Feb 20 Even though he was born on the Isle of Man, Harry Manx relocated to Ontario's Lake Simcoe area as a child. His teenage years were spent working as a roadie for bands like Rush, but he picked up on blues music while working as a soundman in a Toronto club. Even though he used the foreign world as his "learning ground," his musical career really gained momentum after he moved back to Canada four years ago.

"All this time, I've been playing in Europe and Asia and I lived 12 years in India," he explains. "And so, I just sort of showed up some years ago and said, 'Here I am, let's get in the music business.' So, I'm a new artist, but I'm not a new man—I'm almost 50."

It was in Japan where Manx first

heard the eccentric sounds of Vishwa Mohan Bhatt. So intrigued by this unusual musician, Manx contacted Bhatt and later moved to India where he lived and studied under him, eventually mastering the Mohan Veena, an instrument Bhatt invented. "He took a guitar and basically added 14 more strings," explains Manx. "It's basically like a guitar with sympathetic strings [which] are strings you don't really play, but they sing to themselves because they're in tune with the strings you are playing."

Manx relocated to Salt Spring Island in 2000 and soon recorded his first album in 11 hours at Randy Bachman's (Bachman Turner Overdrive, the Band) Barn Studios. *Dog Eat Cat* won him Best Blues Album at that year's Canadian Independent Music Awards and he's recorded four more records since then. His last one, *West Eats Meet* is finished and slated for release later this year. ●

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vision

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

He's minstrel know-it-all

So, Denzel's an Oscar winner and OutKast took home the Grammy. It's all good—the racial divides in North America are all but gone, and everyone's got an equal shot at success, right? Wrong.

Regardless of how far African-Americans seem to have come since the slave trade of the 1600s, it's always helpful to look into the past and compare situations. While there does seem to be an unspoken acceptance of blacks in Hollywood, those shiny lights can be deceptive. It could be argued that the early portrayals of blacks in entertainment were more harmful than shackles and whip burns, since those typecasts set the precedent for the image of blacks in the public's eye for centuries to come.

But I'm getting ahead of myself—this topic is so huge, it'll take me two columns to even summarize it properly. So let me rewind a little.

The "black image" was first popularized in entertainment through minstrel shows. Developed in the U.S. during the

1830s (though David Carlyon, author of *Dan Rice*, reports blackface acts go as far back as the 1750s in Europe), these shows starred white actors who would "blacken up" their faces with burnt cork and ridicule slave life on the plantation, playing out scenarios of lazy blacks dancing all day, strumming on banjos, stealing chickens from the coop and expressing their love for their "dear ol' massa."

The performers may have been white, but it was black culture that they were emulating and embellishing. As Gary Giddins, author of *A Pocketful of Dreams* states, "African-American innovations metamorphose into American popular culture when white performers learn to mimic black ones"—and so was born a long-lived tradition of innovation and thievery.

Crowds both black and white from all backgrounds and classes, from presidents to working men, would flock to minstrel shows (separately, of course). Even Mark Twain expressed fond memories of the "old time nigger show." With catchy and demeaning names like "Zip Coon," "Mr. Tambo" and "Jim Crow" (yes, that's where the term for legalized oppression originated), how could comedy-seeking Americans not flock to the minstrel show? Some of America's most famous songs, including "Oh, Susanna" "Camptown Races" and "Dixie," debuted in minstrel shows.

By the time of the Civil War, minstrel shows had become the most popular form of entertainment in the country—even traveling carnivals and circuses would include a minstrel show, com-

plete with racial stereotypes and degrading humour, to their playbills. When black actors were legally permitted to perform in minstrel shows with whites following the Civil War, the change made possible new financial backing for semi- and all-black comedy troupes, which allowed them to extensively tour the United States and Europe. Still, the majority of black comedians were forced to "blacken up" before performances in order to appear even darker than usual.

In 1890, the first women were seen onstage during minstrel shows. But by that time, the medium was losing steam and by 1920, minstrel shows were passé as people looking for affordable family entertainment instead began attending vaudeville shows, where the performers would do quadruple-duty as singers, dancers, writers and comedians, and appealed to all age groups.

Vaudeville was also the birthplace of the black solo superstar. Bert Williams, a well-known figure on the minstrel show circuit, broke vaudeville's colour barrier in the early 1900s. With the help of long-time collaborator W.C. Fields, Williams became the first black to join Actor's Equity (the showbiz labour union).

But thanks to new technological developments in the 1920s, black entertainment in the USA would shift dramatically once again. Whether the change was positive or negative is still debatable, but blacks would never be seen the same after the introduction of a radio show called *Amos 'n' Andy*. ●

Next week: the latter years (1928-2004)

TOP 20 Megatunes

Your Music Destination

FOR THE WEEK ENDING FEB 19, 2004

1. Corb Lund Band – Modern Pain (corb lund)
2. The Flatlanders – Wheels Of Fortune (new west)
3. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
4. Air – Talkie Walkie (emi)
5. Incubus – Crow Left Of The Murder (sony)
6. Southern Culture On The Skids – Mojo Box (yep roc)
7. For You – Tribute To Compromise (united edge)
8. Lhasa – The Living Road (select)
9. Probot – Probot (southern lord)
10. The Floor – Autonomy Off/On (the floor)
11. Descendents – 'Merican (fat)
12. Martyn Joseph – Whoever It Was That Brought Me.....(jericho beach)
13. Oneida – Secret Wars (jagjaguwar)
14. Ani DiFranco – Educated Guess (righteous babe)
15. Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros – Streetcore (hellcat)
16. Fantomas – Delirium Cordia (ipacac)
17. Mae Moore & Lester Quitau – Oh My! (plant & garden)
18. Johnny Cash – The Man Comes Around (american)
19. No Motive – Daylight Breaking (vagrant)
20. The Special Goodness – Land Air Sea (epitaph)
21. The Faunts – High Expectations/Low Results (faunts)
22. Remembering Never – Women & Children First (ferret)
23. Robert Randolph – Unclassified (darecords)
24. Livin', Lovin', Losin' – Songs Of The Louvin Brothers (universal)
25. Steve Pineo – Around The Horn (stamp)
26. The Lost Patrol – Songs About Running Away (burning heart)
27. The Unintended – S/T (blueeon)
28. The Dixie Hummingbirds – Diamond Jubilation (rounder)
29. Al Green – Cant Stop (blue note)
30. Just Because I'm A Woman – Songs Of Dolly Parton (sugar hill)

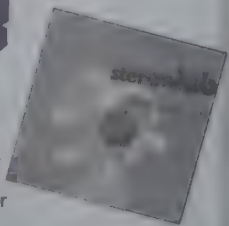
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Much ado about our thing

The Nation's Music Station
pays its annual visit to the
Edmonton music scene

By JERED STUFFCO

When MuchMusic VJ Chris Nelson pulls into town this weekend to shoot seven local acts at Red's for an Edmonton-themed segment of *Going Coastal* (airing March 21), don't look at it as a chance to get your mug on national television—look at it as a public service courtesy of the Nation's Music Station.

"It's a great example of people recognizing the inherent value of their scene and coming together to get it the attention that it deserves," the affable Nelson says over the

phone from a stop in Calgary. "All I'm doing is just acting as a conduit through which they can show themselves to the rest of the country. I'm a public servant, and I think *Going Coastal* is doing its best work when it acts like a public service because ultimately, if one person in Halifax sees the show and as a result of watching it decides that they want to go see that band when they hit their town, then the show will be a success, as far as I'm concerned."

In other words, Nelson and the GC crew are simply doing their

rock 'n' roll duty—namely, creating a buzz for unsigned, lesser-known bands. If anybody should know the power of music programming, it's Nelson. Like many Canadians liv-

PREVIEW SHOWCASE

ing in isolated communities scattered alongside desolate highways, as a kid growing up in small-town Saskatchewan, he had but one source for new and exciting music: the television.

"The first time I heard of bands like the Payolas or Slow from Vancouver or SNFU from Edmonton was on MuchMusic," Nelson says. "I never had an opportunity to see those bands live because I was living in small towns all over western Canada. I'm glad that I can now do that for other people living on the prairies that are in the same position as I was—people in Flin Flon or in Creighton, Saskatchewan or Prince Albert who won't get a chance to see these bands but whose imagination is fueled by watching these them."

While some might deride segments like *Much Does Edmonton* as lip service to a community that is virtually ignored by the programming schedule during the rest of the year, Nelson counters that MuchMusic is still the only broadcaster in North America that regularly airs a locally based program that's devoted solely to music from that region. "I think that implies that some communities are short-served by MuchMusic," he says. "MuchMusic, as much as it is a music network, is also a business, which requires a certain measure of accountability on how they spend their money. In spite of that fact, it's an interesting business model. They are making an effort to do this because they recognize their role as an arbiter of culture—they are to a certain degree how bands get recognized in this country."

Even with the shift to a teen-oriented, MTV style of programming,

where shows like *Becoming* and *Much on Demand* take precedence over *The Wedge* and *The New Music*, Nelson is quick to point out that Much bigwigs in Toronto needed little convincing of the inherent merit of doling out cash to produce segments like *Much Does Edmonton*. "I think there are still enough people at MuchMusic who feel it's important to support [homegrown] talent," he says. "I know there are people at Much who get frustrated when an artist has to go outside our own country to be successful. Really, it should start here and grow outward as opposed to happening elsewhere and then coming back for validation."

While Nelson agrees that earlier incarnations of the network devoted more airtime to lesser-known homegrown talent, he nevertheless sees segments like *Much Does Edmonton* as a huge opportunity for everybody. "These shows satisfy me the most," he says. "When you do these shows, you can see how it benefits the bands immediately, and that is really gratifying. It makes doing this job worthwhile, because the bands come away from it really enthusiastic and they get the national exposure they deserve." ●

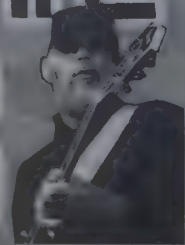
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3) GROBAN, JOSH

CLOSER

4) V/A-CONT

2004 GRAMMY NOMINEES

5) INCUBUS

CROW LEFT OF THE MURDER

6) MCLACHLAN, SARAH

AFTERGLOW

7) EVANESCENCE

BALLER

8) BLACK EYED PEAS

ELEPHUNK

9) DIDO

LIFE FOR RENT

10) PROBOT

PROBOT

top 10 diver's

1) LION KING 1 1/2

2) BEATLES

FIRST U.S. VISIT

3) INTOLERABLE CRUELTY

(WIDE SCREEN)

4) ANGEL

SEASON 3 (6DVD)

5) PIRATES OF THE

CARIBBEAN (2DVD)

6) OPEN RANGE (2DVD)

7) WONDERLAND

LIMITED EDITION (2DVD)

8) RED DWARF

SERIES 3

9) LOST IN TRANSLATION

(WIDESCREEN)

10) FINDING NEMO

NEW SOUNDS

LAMBCHOP

AW C'MON/NO YOU C'MON
(MERGE)

"There are people that I know who learn to live within their limits," mutters Kurt Wagner on "Action Figure," the song that closes out his band Lambchop's new disc *Aw C'mon*. But he obviously doesn't include himself in their company, since *Aw C'mon* is only one of two wildly ambitious new full-length albums Lambchop released this week. (Its partner is called *No You C'mon*, which you'll have to admit makes for a much funnier pair of titles than, say, *Use Your Illusion I* and *II*.) Apparently Wagner set himself the task last year of writing a new song every day for a period of several months; somewhere in there, he was also commissioned to compose a score for the silent film *Sunrise*, and the two dozen songs in the double-disc *C'mon* package represent the best material to emerge from this remarkable creative binge.

A few critics have tried to spot the differences between the two discs, but they sound pretty much the same to

me: lush, heartachy string arrangements over which Wagner speak-sings his trademark elusive lyrics of sadness, alienation and heartbreak in his trademark low, wise, world-weary voice (which always reminds me of Eugene Levy parodying Perry Como on *SCTV*, lying face-first on a couch, nearly comatose, mumbling lyrics into a microphone propped up near his mouth). The best song in this vein is probably "Each Time I Bring It Up It Seems to Bring You Down" from *Aw*, but Wagner shakes up the formula a little on *No You* with the guitar-driven "Nothing Adventurous Please" and the happy-go-lucky nonsense of "Shang a Dang Dang."

The sound of these two albums is much richer and warmer than Lambchop's previous effort, the masterfully bleak *Is a Woman*, but Wagner's songwriting style may still be too chilly and opaque for these discs to find much favour in the mainstream. But anyone with an appreciation of songcraft and studio artistry will listen to them with a sense of awe. Or should I say, *Aw*. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

WITH GUESTS

RED'S

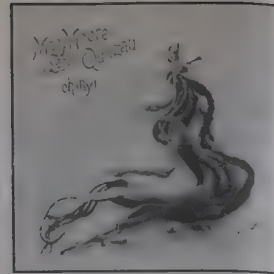
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VUEWEEKLY



DAMAGEPLAN

NEW FOUND POWER
(WARNER)

When a well-known band breaks up, it's always interesting to see what paths the former members take. Will they keep making music similar to what they did before, or will they follow through on ideas that would never have worked with their old band?

It didn't take long for drummer Vinnie Paul and guitarist Dimebag Darrell to form a new band, Damageplan, after the breakup of Pantera, the band that set the standard for the downtuned, vocals-from-the-back-of-the-throat "nü-metal" sound that swept the hard rock world in the '90s. And Paul and D.D. aren't out to throw their fans any curveballs here. The vocals still come from the back of the throat, the drums still pound away at tribal rhythm after tribal rhythm, and D.D.'s guitar goes up and down the scale like a rollercoaster. Pantera fans who never wanted Paul or D.D. to change gears will consider this a reliable effort but those who believed the band had already run its course may write off Damageplan as nothing more than two metal demigods going through the motions. ★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

MAE MOORE AND LESTER QUITZAU
OH MY!
(POETICAL LICENSE)

It's a cheesy cliché but it's true—Mae Moore and Lester Quitzau do make beautiful music together. Moore, a Canadian folk veteran who recently

returned to her indie roots, and Quitzau, Edmonton's longtime, long-haired blues guitar guru, got hitched and are now shackled up together on British Columbia's Pender Island, a charming li'l isle in the southern Strait of Georgia (actually two islands connected by a causeway, if you wanna get technical). Their home, on a country lane that slopes down to the ocean, looked positively idyllic when I happened to pass by it on a camping trip to the coast last summer. And the photo of their living room (recording studio?) inside *Oh My!* backs up my impression, as do the songs on their first collaborative release. Their lives must be heavenly.

Combining 10 of their own songs with a pair of covers—"Hold On" off Tom Waits's *Mule Variations* and Hendrix's "Little Wing"—Moore and Quitzau use their voices and guitars to carry us away into a summer daydream. As always, Quitzau's guitarwork is stunning; even instrumentals like "Charlie Picked His Apple" tell a story through his precision and flair. It's probably wrong to project my vision of sheer contentment onto Moore and Quitzau's life together, but *Oh My!* certainly doesn't do anything to dispel images of their island utopia. ★★★★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

TARBOX RAMBLERS
A FIX BACK EAST
(ROUNDER)

Michael Tarbox wouldn't sound out of place at either at the smoke-filled Commercial on a weekend run or

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top 10 sellers

01. dead cities, red seas & lost ghosts m83	06. chutes too narrow the shine
02. pyramid electric co jason molina	07. the homosexuals cd the homosexuals
03. heron kings blivas califone	08. the homeland bobby conn
04. secret wars oneida	09. live in kreteld this heat
05. winter hymn country... do make say think	10. michigan suffian stevens



playing a mission, delivering songs of hope to the poor. That's because the Tarbox Ramblers' latest effort includes an urban blues sound with a heavy emphasis on rock 'n' roll, music that reeks of sex, drugs and whiskey. But it's also balanced with a series of Appalachian country-influenced originals and traditional songs perfect for a Sunday revival, from a straight-on fiddle-filled cover of the traditional gospel tune "No Night There" to the sweet country guitar lead on "Were You There?", Tarbox's take on the crucifixion story, which revels in the deep religious roots of the deep South.

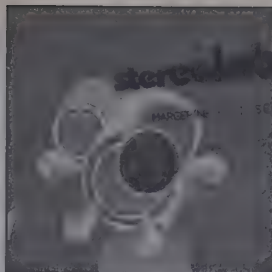
Tarbox's growling blues delivery is perfect for the rockers, but he cleans up the gravel in his throat when he does his devotional music—it's as if there are two totally different Tarboxes, split up in a transporter accident (leaving us with the "good" Tarbox and the "evil" Tarbox), who have each made half an album. But give the man credit:



never does his devotional music indulge in excessive pulpit-thumping. And when Tarbox makes his blues guitar howl and sing, his devil inside makes for warm comfort. ★★★ — STEVEN SANDOR

PHANTOM PLANET PHANTOM PLANET (EPIC)

In trying to outdo their respectable but safe 2002 release *The Guest*, Phantom Planet have veered dangerously close to the rocky crags of Strokes island, a turf war they simply can't win. The shame of it is, Phantom Planet have crafted an ingenious sophomore album, an album that should vault them into public consciousness for reasons other than the fact that the nerd from *Rushmore* is their drummer. Sadly, you'll never be able to hear it over the din of all the white-belted naysayers. ★★★ — WHITEY AND REGGIE



STEREOLAB MARGERINE ECLIPSE (ELEKTRA)

Stereolab is such a prolific band that there was little doubt they'd be able to battle through the tragic and untimely death of founding member Mary Hansen and released another top-notch album of soothing pop. On *Margarine Eclipse*, their unmistakable sound and their propensity for releasing one zillion albums a year works both for and against them. On the one hand, they haven't missed a step in the 13-plus years since they first plugged in the Moogs and they still seem able to effortlessly write reams and reams of quality material, and *Margarine Eclipse*, smoothly continues Stereolab's sonic migration from buzzing jangle towards more pastoral, loungey territory. But on the other hand, I can't say this disc is distinctive enough for me to recommend it over any of the band's previous work. ★★★★★ — WHITEY HOUSTON

QUICK SPINS

BY WHITEY AND REGGIE

Sekiden, *Junior Fiction* (Boompal!)

Solid pop album that sounds like they had fun making it. Guitars fuzz, keyboards go *schweee* and the Speak 'n' Spell drones. Repeated listens are in my future.

Various Artists, *From the Girls* (Nettwerk)

I think the swollen and chafed teats on this cash cow need some healin' time. I mean, how many copies of that fucking Dido song do you really need?

Meat Puppets, *Classic Puppets* (Rykodisc)

From atonal punk rock burnouts to acid country pioneers, this 24-track Meat Puppets retrospective covers a lot of delightful territory. If modern rock is rubbing you wrong then this is the balm to reach for (also relieves chafed teats). Perhaps even more enlightening than the music is the extensive, quote-filled liner notes. Any way you slice it, this is a quality cut of Meat Puppet.

The Drogues, *Doesn't Mean a Thing* (Independent)

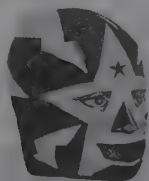
The promo photo these guys sent in shows them casually sporting I Love Vagina T-shirts. How gay is that?

Five for Fighting, *The Battle for Everything* (Aware)

Take Eddie Vedder, suck the life out of him and teach him some bad Grade 7 poetry. Throw in some strings for added gravity. Make an expensive video and sell a zillion records. Who's laughing now, sucker? Huh? Huh?

Joe Jackson Band, *Afterlife* (Rykodisc)

Actors shouldn't sing, musicians shouldn't handle money, and rock songs often don't translate well to other genres. The last live Joe Jackson album we reviewed left us a little disappointed by its world-beatitude; but the original Joe Jackson Band is back, and they brought the rock. "Got the Time" alone is worth the price of admission.



CAGE MATCH OF THE WEEK

Ani DiFranco
Educated Guess (Righteous Babe)
VS.
Melissa Etheridge
Lucky (Island)



Hmmm... what to pick? The man-hating feminist archetype or the schmaltzy lesbian rocker? In the interest of subjectivity, both discs have their moments. Ani's signature style is in full effect and once again she's lyrically spoiling for a fight—all done with her unrelenting DIY passion. Fans will not be disappointed. Etheridge tries to get *Lucky* by rewriting "Come to My Window" three or four times. She does succeed in making a fairly meaty record, with the best tracks coming when she straps on... ummm... her electric guitar and lets loose. We can easily picture Anne Heche swaying around her asylum to either of these, so we'll declare it a draw.

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classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

One for the ages

Though modern society romanticizes youth, recent concerts have proved that musical accomplishment comes at all ages and in all sizes. It is remarkable that eight-year-old pianist Harris Wang played his second solo concert last week, at McDougall United Church, and that he's had many other heady experiences, television appearances and the like in the last two years. But as his

piano teacher, Miriam Mahood, notes, "Stardom can get out of control, causing a change of focus and loss of valuable learning time. Neither is it really educational, not like winning a festival."

Then there's delightful young French-Canadian contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux, lauded as the spiritual descendent of opera legend Maureen Forrester. Two weeks ago, Lemieux seduced audiences and journalists alike with her charm and rich, nuanced interpretations. Brava to her, however, for refusing to be typecast. Her repertoire for her solo appearance with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Master's Series was strikingly at odds with her effervescent personality. Brahms' gorgeous *Alto Rhapsody* is actually the disillusioned cry of a suicidal man who has turned his back on love, while in his *Adieu, Robert Schumann*, Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer chose an equally melancholy subject, Clara Schumann's account of her husband's descent into madness.

Unlike Harris Wang, who started piano study at four, Lemieux began professional voice lessons at 19, less than 10 years ago. It's also worth noting that most opera singers don't reach their peak until their mid-thirties. In other words, for all her glamour and ability, Lemieux is still a work in progress and likely to get better and better as she matures. Those age groups currently being courted by the media may be cheating themselves if their blinders prevent them from seeing outside their own demographic.

When Mahood talks about successful long careers, perhaps she's thinking of veterans such as internationally renowned performer Anton Kuerti, also a recent soloist with the ESO. Kuerti, who played the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major, crouched low over the keyboard for his attack and cast a spell worthy of the composer himself. Incidentally, the legendary Glenn Gould was also famous for his

bad posture and hand positions.

Mahood could also be referring to one of her former colleagues at Grant MacEwan's Alberta College Campus Conservatory of Music. The vivacious Alexandra Munn, though in her seventies and a member of the Edmonton Cultural Hall of Fame, shows no sign of resting on her laurels. She gave the "Symphony Prelude" for the concert that featured Kuerti, punctuating her comments with live keyboard demonstrations.

Munn, formerly a member of the University of Alberta music faculty, not only teaches piano but also coaches voice and offers a collaborative voice and piano class. Yesterday, Munn appeared at *Music Wednesdays at Noon* with oboist Hiromi Takahashi and clarinetist John Mahon. Explaining how these collaborations came about, Takahashi described himself and Mahon as the side orders, with Munn the "main dish."

Having made my bid for seasoned artists, I'm also excited to see a number

of young Canadian performers making their presence known. This coming weekend, for instance, the ESO features flutist Christie Reside and cellist Denise Djokic. Reside, now in her early twenties, won the ESO's 2001 Canadian Concerto Competition. She takes part in Friday and Saturday Masters' concerts of smoky Latin-American works by Albéniz, Rodrigo and Falla. Falla also appears on Sunday's program featuring both emerging stars and ESO regulars. The concert in the series—now known as the Davis Sunday Showcase—also features Barry Nemish in a rarely-heard timpani concerto.

Halifax-born Djokic last appeared in Edmonton in the fall of 2002 with the rebel Metamorphosis Orchestra. Like Reside, she started young and has been winning prizes, such as the Irving M. Klein International String Competition, for several years. The ESO's principal guest conductor for the 2003-2004 season, Franz-Paul Decker, will be conducting the three weekend concerts. ☐

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By DAVID STONE

Sneak memory

Last weekend was surely a mind-bender—it's like Edmonton's club scene suddenly woke up and realized there's more than top 40 meat-market fodder out there. Halo filled up quickly to check out Diz put together another set of hustling Chicago rhythms, while some made the trek to Century Grill for *A Stellar Night of Passion*—where I had an awesome time playing—but it seemed like Edmonton was hungry for techno. United brought DJ Dan to town, and put one of Edmonton's leading lights in the opening slot. Next to Rob Tryptomene, Neal K is probably the best techno DJ in Alberta, if not this side of the country, so it doesn't surprise me to hear that he laid out a near-genius set. Sure, Dan is a great DJ, but the local boy is the one who got everybody riled up. You see? Edmonton doesn't realize the talent in their midst.

This weekend should be another kicker. Of course, this Friday is a return trip to Red's for the local debut of **DJ Sneak**. From the release of his single "You Can't Hide From Your Bud," the Chicago-by-way-of-Puerto Rico native has educated and influenced an entire generation of DJs, producers and clubbers in the ecstatic sound of filtered house. Listen to a record by Basement Jaxx, Daft Punk or Armand van Helden and somewhere in there you'll hear a bit of Sneak's spirit jacking the groove.

We can thank Green Velvet for introducing us to the revolutionary sounds of Sneak. Early in his career, Carlos Sosa was playing around with salsa and merengue before being

drawn into the underground house scene of Chicago. It was here he met the Velvet man—also known in house circles by the moniker Cajmere—who agreed to release some of Sneak's singles through his Cajual label. Before you knew it, the rushing filtered sound that has come to characterize his work has been studied, imitated and bastardized by players all around the world. They've returned the favour by making sure Sneak is playing in every corner of the globe on a weekly basis.

The sad part about this show is that Junior Brown is unable to play it. Although his name appears on the flyer, the Halo proprietor is simply too tied up with other business—including his newly opened pub, Red Star—to be able to join in. Connected Entertainment's Nestor Delano will set up the groove, while I'll be around at opening to set down a little groovy atmosphere. Tickets are \$15, available at Red's, Foosh, Colourblind, Underground and Ticketmaster.

The next night at Stars, another unique figure is coming to town to lay out a little education. Triple DMC world champ **DJ Craze** is a must-see if you're even remotely interested in the art of turntablism, and he's moved into a new arena since retiring from competition as one of the world's most exciting jungle players. He was one of the first DMC finalists to break away from the standard hip hop sound and began applying his cut-and-scratch technique on the stuttering beats and amen breaks of drum 'n' bass. In performance, he splices hip hop and jungle over top of each other, reinventing and creating rhythms in the moment, using up to four turntables at any given moment. I caught Craze a couple of years ago at Aria in Montreal, and I was transfixed for the entire time. What's fantastic about him is how he never forgets that he's playing to rock the party, not to impress the b-boys up front. He wants you to dance, so just enjoy yourself. You can thank Degree and the rest of the soldiers at Subterranean Sound for putting this one together. Tickets at Foosh. ☐



FILM

Band of insiders

Bertolucci's sexy *The Dreamers* combines 1968 and lots of 69

By BRIAN GIBSON

"A filmmaker is like a voyeur, a peeping Tom—it's like the camera is a keyhole to your parents' bedroom." —Matthew, in *The Dreamers*

The Dreamers is a camera buff's fantasy. From Chaplin's *City Lights* to Godard's *Band of Outsiders*, Bernardo Bertolucci's film

rides a (mostly French New) wave of movie allusions. Of course, since this is a Bertolucci film (his first since the excellent and comparatively restrained *Besieged*), there is plenty of buff in front of the camera, too, not to mention kink: smooth male torsos, full frontal nudity, incest, a bisexual love triangle and perverse games. There is enough youthful energy and sexual tension to float *The Dreamers* along, although the film's deeper potential and political context slip away.

Adapted from his 1989 novel *The Holy Innocents*, Gilbert Adair's screenplay is set in Paris during the 1968 student riots. Cinephile Matthew (Michael Pitt) is an exile in the *City of Lights*, escaping the draft for the Vietnam War back home. He meets twins Isabelle (Anna Green) and Theo (Louis Garrel) one day outside student protests at the government seizure of the city's cinematheque ("when the world finally burst through the screen," Matthew notes in voiceover). Struck by the oddly intimate pair, he falls in with them and is soon staying at their house while their mother and poet father (Anne Chancellor and Robert Renucci) are away for a few weeks. The trio recreate iconic film scenes and immerse themselves in a bohemian existence, slowly trapping themselves in a stifling threesome.

With its focus on virgin, adolescent sexual experimentation in a European loft, the film is a sort of First Tango in Paris. The spark between Matthew and Isabelle flares

up immediately, with the dark-eyed Theo serving as the catalyst. Like Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris*, with its infamous stick-of-butter-scene, *The Dreamers* abounds with sexual fluids and substances, from virgin and menstrual blood to semen and honey-dripping fingers.

Michael Pitt, as Matthew, has a bit of a DiCaprio pout, but bears a more obvious resemblance to a young, pre-Tango Marlon Brando, from his muscular acting style to his imitative dress of white T-shirt, jeans and Converse sneakers. Louis Garrel as Theo looks uncannily like Jean-Pierre Léaud, who played Maria Schneider's fiancé in *Last Tango* and (and who makes a cameo appearance in *Dreamers*). Of

the three relative unknowns, Green is the weakest element—her Anna is often too cold and unbelievable in her efforts to seem mature.

THE DREAMERS WORKS BEST in its early sections, as it thrives on Bertolucci's obvious love for earlier films. The trio break the record, set in *Band of Outsiders*, for running through the Louvre, an exhilarating sequence in which Bertolucci splices in parallel scenes from Godard's film. Matthew and Theo argue the merits of Chaplin vs. Keaton, while brother and sister recreate scenes from the original *Scarface* and Dietrich's *Blonde Venus*, allowing for more classic scenes from those films to pop onscreen. As the three youths play with each others' sexuality, though, the movie becomes more sterile and claustrophobic. Bertolucci critics have long accused him of wielding the lens as a cold, all-seeing, voyeuristic eye that fetishizes his actors' physiques (most notoriously in the Liv Tyler tribute *Stealing Beauty*), and too often Matthew and Isabelle are reduced to nubile bodies out of some luminous underwear ad.

The inner world of the trio's gorgeous, labyrinthine apartment isn't well related to the outside world's tempestuous times, either. Striking a relevant note on Franco-American relations, *The Dreamers* enticingly suggests that Matthew is more politically progressive and thoughtful than the French twins, who are stuck in a fatally juvenile relation-

ship and merely flirt coyly with student activism and Maoism. But this political-sexual connection isn't fleshed out. (The recent documentary *The Weather Underground* did a better job, in less time, of showing how the naive idealism of '60s activism suffocated itself.) Theo and Isabelle condemn their father for refusing to sign petitions, only poems, but *The Dreamers*, too, immerses itself in lyrical images without getting to the political bottom line, leaving the student riots as

an unexplained backdrop. Bertolucci's cinematic love affair skirts around the inevitable, messy breakup, too—the ending, though it provides a necessary metaphorical conflict and apparent resolution, leaves some plot threads dangling. And by soft-pedaling the political strife while accentuating the sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, Bertolucci makes the '60s seem more of a wonderland than I suspect it was. Still, for those of us who missed the decade that was "our parents' bedroom," *The Dreamers* pro-

vides enough heady evocations of a sexually riotous, politically charged period—buoyed by a great soundtrack featuring Joplin, Hendrix, the Doors and the Grateful Dead—to make Bertolucci's latest an enjoyable, though narrow-eyed, trip back in time through the cinematic looking glass. ●

THE DREAMERS

Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci • Written by Gilbert Adair • Starring Michael Pitt, Anna Green and Louis Garrel • Opens Fri, Feb 20

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Pang, Pang, you're dead

Hong Kong horror movie *The Eye* loses sight of its chilling premise

BY JOSEF BRAUN

In Oxide and Danny Pang's *The Eye*, a young Hong Kong woman named Mun (Malaysian pop star Lee Sin-je), blind since the age of two, has her vision restored when the eyes of an unknown donor are surgically inserted into her sockets. But since these eyes initially belonged to someone else, is it in fact Mun's vision that's being restored or the vision of some dead stranger? At first it's diffi-

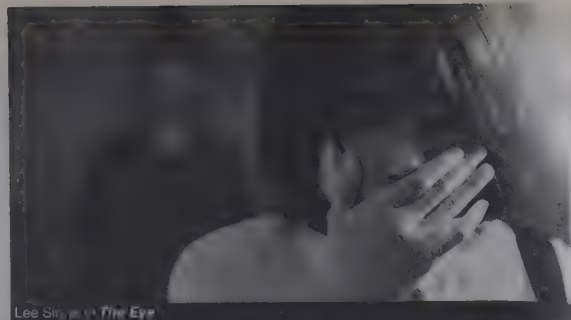
cult to tell: her initial attempts to see again are blurred and somewhat painful, although the doctors insist she should accept that a period of adjustment is natural, that the eyes and the brain need to find a way to reconnect. Soon enough Mun is going about on her own, functioning normally and discovering the world of sight, only to find that there are

REVIEW THRILLER

things in that world only she seems capable of seeing, including people who float instead of walk and others who appear to be missing vital parts of their bodies and heads. Before long, the terrifying truth becomes clear: Mun sees dead people.

"I'm freezing," says the old woman hovering in the hospital corridor at night. "I'm hungry," says the pale little kid chewing on candlesticks down the hall from Mun's kindly grandma. Not content just to be freaky, ghosts have problems too, and the first third or so of *The Eye* forgoes things like character development to plant the seeds of a far more elaborate ghost saga than the catchy premise initially seems to promise, one that takes Mun and her handsome young psycho therapist Dr. Wah all the way to a superstitious village in Thailand.

THE PANG BROTHERS, who scripted the film along with Jo Jo Yuet-chun Hui, aren't afraid of relying on some pretty old-school chill-inducers: the big sound that cracks out of the speakers when something potentially scary suddenly appears, or the creepy thing in the elevator that's coming closer, closer, closer as the floor indicators light up with glacial slowness. (Elevators are always demonic conspirators in horror movies.) These shopworn tricks work decently enough in small doses, but what's much better are the deeper psychological twists that arise from the beauty of the film's core idea, especially the



Lee Sin-je in *The Eye*

way the Pangs make us question the reliability of our senses, as when Mun wakes in the middle of the night to see her room changing into another with maddening ease, or a startling moment on a train when Mun makes a disturbing realization. But not everything old-fashioned about *The Eye* is a virtue; the film also suffers from mouldy, soapy dialogue, like when Dr. Wah (played by Chinese-Canadian pop star Lawrence Chou) ends an absurdly dramatic confrontation with his uncle by turning in the doorway and saying, "It's true. She is more than just a patient to me."

Lee for her part does a pretty remarkable job of evoking a sense of fear, hopelessness and sensory displacement, making us feel empathy for her flake of a character. Vision brings her a lot more grief than it's perhaps ultimately worth (she even gets kicked out of an orchestra for the

blind!), and her journey from child-like awe to disappointment is clearly suggested in Lee's well-timed performance. But the love story feels so arbitrarily tacked on and the narrative so out of control that we soon feel alienated by the all-too-visible mechanics at work. I think Oliver Sacks would be let down.

And one last question: the movie's called *The Eye*, yet Mun receives a pair of them. What the hell? Is this a translation thing? Are singulars supposed to be scarier than plurals? Or is one of Mun's eyes going to return for revenge in the sequel? ☹

THE EYE

Directed by Oxide Pang and Danny Pang • Written by Oxide Pang, Danny Pang and Jo Jo Yuet-chun Hui • Starring Lee Sin-je and Lawrence Chou • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon Feb 20-23 (9pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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I can't believe it's not Buddha

Documentary *Words of My Perfect Teacher* fails to achieve enlightenment

BY BRIAN GIBSON

The "perfect teacher" in Canadian documentarian Lesley Ann Patten's *Words of My Perfect Teacher* is Dzongsar Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche, third in line to the Dalai Lama. His students in the film are Louise Rudd and Vancouverite Luc Dierkx. Patten herself is a disciple of Rinpoche, and seems to have made the doc in order to examine her guru and her own feelings about him. Unfortunately for the uninitiated, the film is a largely frustrating odyssey that seems to be preaching to the converted. Patten's sometimes chirpy, flighty and indulgent doc skims over its questions and avoids deep answers or contexts.

After a slightly disjointed beginning that offers a too-brief overview of Buddhism, the nomadic camera sets down in London, following Rinpoche and Dierkx, his informal secretary, around the city. Rinpoche, well aware that people want to see him as some great, Yoda-like spiritual mentor, offers some intriguingly cryptic insights into the teacher-student relationship: "He has to be the mirror by which you see yourself, but he is also the assassin; he or she is the man or woman that you have hired to dismantle you." Dierkx

paints the man as a wise imp, at one point wondering in exasperation, "Why doesn't he act like a fucking enlightened human being?" Rinpoche's disappeared for long spells without contacting Dierkx and apparently knows people's buttons and how to push them. During the film he leaves people waiting, vacillates on travel plans and is not the most forthcoming of interview subjects.

And his student's film is often as frustratingly elusive as he is as Patten skips about from angle to angle, slipping now into overly arch narration, then zooming through a fascinating subplot. The parallel between Rinpoche and student Louise Rudd's other circumspsect mentor, her Aunt Shirley,

REVIEW DOCUMENTARY

is never solidified. Patten tracks down but doesn't spend enough time with a lapsed lama, Gesar Mukpo, who seems to be enjoying the good life in California. Mukpo's interesting advice is diminished by a flip "battle of the sages" contest with Steven Seagal (who, though he is apparently the reincarnation of a 17th-century Buddhist tulku, comes off as a second-rate Stallone with a god complex, confusing wise words with big, meaningless ones).

RINPOCHE REMAINS sly and elusive. We learn that he loves soccer—Rinpoche served as an advisor to Bertolucci for *Little Buddha*, then went on to

direct the Buddhist soccer film *The Cup*—but never why or if there is a relation between the "great game" and his spiritual calling. The film looks resplendent, never more so than when Patten and company travel with Rinpoche to Bhutan, where he is preparing to make his second film, *Travellers and Magicians*. But Rinpoche's relationship to the people of his transplanted homeland, or to the Dalai Lama, or the reason why he stays in the West to be a guru for middle-class white people (because Buddhism's preoccupation with self-examination dovetails nicely with Western narcissism?), remain a tantalizing mystery.

Dierkx, who dares to wonder about the difference between bin Laden and Rinpoche, is the most interesting disciple, but we don't see enough of him, or even learn what ever drew him to Buddhism and his enigmatic mentor, whose teachings—to meditate, be kind and break down your own ignorance—are persuasive but remain too abstract. No doubt enlightenment's in the eye of the beholder, but it's hard to imagine anyone other than a patient, studious Buddhist finding this film wholly satisfying. Speaking impiously for the rest of us, this spiritual treat is more mystifying than edifying. ☹

WORDS OF MY PERFECT TEACHER

Directed by Lesley Ann Patten • Featuring Dzongsar Khyentse Norbu Rinpoche, Luc Dierkx and Louise Rudd • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Feb 20-23 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

Nobody dislikes Raymond

...but Romano's passive comic style doesn't make *Welcome to Mooseport* funny

BY DARREN ZENKO

The mystery of Ray Romano's popularity is deep and abiding. What is it with this guy, that everyone loves him so? A long-suffering guy-next-door type who means well and muddles through as best he can... fine. But what's the attraction of seeing the guy-next-door on TV—and now movies—when you could just actually go next door and see him? It's not like Romano's going to be any funnier than your real-life neighbour—he has zero comic timing and delivers his lines like a nearsighted man reading unfamiliar cue cards. One theory has it that Romano's managed to avoid the usual requirements for comic success by virtue of his likability.

Maybe, maybe... but there's "likability" and then there's "undislikability," and they're not the same thing. In *Welcome to Mooseport*, his feature-

film debut, Romano's hapless handyman comes across as so relentlessly dumb and reflexively well-meaning that he couldn't be anything but likable, like a friendly dog or a pretty tree; we like him because it doesn't seem possible that he could muster the intelligence or personal volition to do something we wouldn't like. Another one of these totally reactive movie characters, this time courtesy of Tom "I wrote *Dead Poets Society*, so I can pretty much coast until I die" Schul-

REVUE COMEDY

man, whose big character flaw is an inability to accept risks, make commitments or take any kind of uncoerced action—real compelling, propulsive dramatic dynamo!

And so... Romano's not-unlovable dummy can't bring himself to make a real (i.e., ring-symbolized) commitment to the incredible Maura Tierney, and she rightly dumps his bumbling ass. Former U.S. president Gene Hackman—a gifted old hack phoning in as "the most beloved chief executive in history"—arrives to take his retirement in their small Maine town of Mooseport, only to find himself implausibly

drafted into standing for mayor. Romano (without his knowledge and against his will, it goes without saying) is mooted by his busybody hag of a shop assistant to run against him. He immediately withdraws, only to see the Prez put the moves on his now-ex. He immediately withdraws his withdrawal, in a gibbering street rant that's half Jimmy Stewart and half Wesley Willis, and the race is on!

THERE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY for satire here, and you can catch sad little glimpses of it as you sit through *Welcome to Mooseport's* brisk 19-hour runtime. A canny and fiercely competitive ex-president and his crack team of publicists, assistants, fixers and Secret Service men, fresh from the constant daily razor-margin battle of the White House and used to winning, mobilizing against a mildly retarded plumber armed with not much more than a shitbox truck and some photocopied leaflets? It could have worked.

But satire has to have bite, and *Mooseport* has precious little. See, to have bite you have to have conflict, and even with the built-in head-butting of a love triangle framed by an goddamn election campaign, director Donald Petrie manages to minimize



Gene Hackman and Ray Romano in *Welcome to Mooseport*

the flying sparks. Hell, even *Rip fucking Torn* comes across as an agreeable fellow who just wants to help. The problem is, there's no villain—Hackman and Romano are both basically decent guys who got wrapped up in a pain-in-the-ass situation and just want to get out of it intact. This sets up the bizarre (yet somehow totally predictable) situation of staging the climax of the

movie as a prolonged struggle for capitulation, a heated battle over who gets to give up first. You'll pay for the whole seat, but you'll only need the edge!

WELCOME TO MOOSEPORT

Directed by Donald Petrie • Written by Tom Schulman • Starring Ray Romano, Gene Hackman, Maura Tierney and Marcia Gay Harden • Opens Fri, Feb 20

Chunk in the trunk

Shannan Calcutt's alter ego Izzy goes from the Fringe to the gym

BY BRIAN GIBSON

Edmonton artist, activist, writer, producer and arts journalist Pamela Anthony may want to think of adding "ringmaster" to her résumé. After all, her first film, *Chunk*, meant that she was directing a clown.

This is no ordinary red-nosed jester, though. Well-known Fringe performer Shannan Calcutt's Izzy is a "very neurotic, contemporary, female clown character—I think it was a natural that people wanted to take this character into film," Anthony explains over the phone. "Clown" is a very particular kind of performance and indicates a point of view that's just slightly left of normal, and that's Izzy—she's sort of like a young twentysomething girl slightly left of normal."

In Anthony's celluloid big tent, cinematographer and editor Clinton Carew and producer David Cheoros were also key members of the troupe. But Calcutt's big-shoe ambition and her flaming-haired alter ego propelled the project. For *Chunk* (which screens tonight at Metro Cinema alongside Jane Campion's 1990 debut *Sweetie*), Anthony says, "We went with the spirit of the character and carried it through what could

otherwise be a dreadfully sincere, issue-oriented piece."

In the 23-minute film, Izzy, perpetually obsessed with men and her looks, discovers one day that her usual wedding dress outfit doesn't fit because of a "chunk." Determined to work off this extra bit of belly, she naively follows fitness magazine advice and works out for a day, only to find that her quick fixes haven't helped.

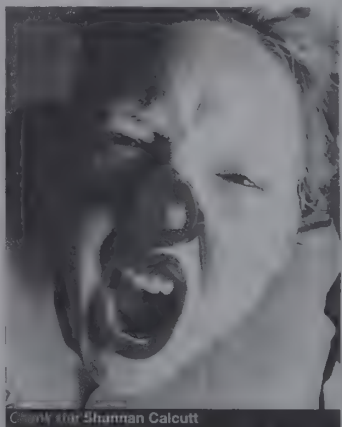
In *Chunk's* subject, and the film's refusal to "wrap everything up in a bow," as Anthony notes, Izzy's world is a funhouse mirror of our own. "Clown spoofs us—very few of us resolve our body issues. We just find something new to distract us or to put salve on the wound, or we find a better pair of jeans and decide it's all okay."

"I think the serious fun of Shannan Calcutt's clown character Izzy," Anthony continues, "is that it reveals us, in all of our contradictions and inconsistencies. [In a world where] we all sugarcoat our dreams and aspirations and neuroses

REVUE LOCAL

around these issues, the clown strips away that thin veneer of sophistication and shows us what's really pulsing just beneath the surface."

The bulk of *Chunk* was shot in five days last summer in Winnipeg.



Calcutt and Shannan Calcutt

The gym scenes took place in an athletic club at old Fort Garry, where Jennifer Lopez and Richard Gere were also making a movie. So the crew had to park far away and haul their gear past the many Hollywood film trucks to shoot their low-budget short.

In March, *Chunk* will return to the site of its humble beginnings for its world premiere at the Winnipeg CBC Comedy Festival. Looking ahead, Anthony modestly hopes that someone "way smarter than me" will see her directorial debut, leading to Izzy's Mr. Bean-like breakout on TV, spinning her foolish antics off into various mini comic dramas.

CHUNK

Directed by Pamela Anthony • Starring Shannan Calcutt and Neil Dalrymple • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Thu, Feb 19 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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NEW THIS WEEK

Against the Ropes (CO, FP) Meg Ryan, Omar Epps and Tony Shalhoub star in director Charles S. Dutton's biopic based on the life of Jackie Kallen, the outspoken Detroit woman who overcame the entrenched sexism of the boxing world to forge an unlikely but successful career as a fight promoter.

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Adam Garcia and Allison Pill star in director Sara Sugarman's adaptation of Dylan Sheldon's YA novel about a teenage girl who campaigns for the lead in the school play as a way of re-establishing her popularity after her family moves from Greenwich Village to a godforsaken New Jersey suburb.

The Dreamers (GA) Michael Pitt, Anna Green and Louis Garrel star in *Last Tango in Paris* director Bernardo Bertolucci's racy drama, set in Paris in 1968, about a young American cinema buff who enters into a hothouse sexual triangle with a beautiful, wealthy Parisian girl and her equally charismatic brother. Based on Gilbert Adair's novel *The Holy Innocents*. In French with English subtitles.

Eurotrip (CO, FP) L. Michelle Trachtenberg, Scott Mechlowicz, Jacob Pitts and Travis Wester star in director Jeff Schaffer's teen comedy about a high-school graduates who takes his three friends on a wacky adventure across Europe on the way to his first face-to-face meeting with his sexy German pen pal.

The Eye (M) Lee Sin-je, Lawrence Chou and Chutcha Rujananon star in Danny and Oxide Pang's eerie supernatural thriller about a young blind woman who regains her sight as the result of an eye transplant—only to gain the power to see mysterious otherworldly figures, as well. In Cantonese, Thai and Mandarin with English subtitles. *Zeldler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Feb 23 (3pm)*

The Passion of the Christ (CO, FP) Jim Caviezel and Monica Bellucci star in *Braveheart* director Mel Gibson's ultra-controversial, blood-soaked biblical epic depicting the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles. *(Opens Wed, Feb 25)*

Sweetie (M) Genevieve Lemon, Karen Colston and Tom Lycos star in *The Piano* director Jane Campion's mordant 1989 domestic comedy about an emotionally withdrawn woman whose foundering marriage becomes even more chaotic when her crazed, overweight sister shows up on her doorstep. Showing with local director Pamela Anthony's short film *Chunk*. *Zeldler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Feb 19 (7pm)*

Welcome to Mooseport (CO, FP, L) Ray Romano, Gene Hackman, Maura Tierney and Marcia Gay Harden star in *Grumpy Old Men* director Donald Petrie's comedy about a former U.S. president, newly relocated to a sleepy Maine town, who gets pulled into a no-holds-barred mayoral election campaign against the owner of the local hardware store

Words of My Perfect Teacher (M) Director Lesley Ann Patten's affectionate documentary portrait of renowned Buddhist teacher Khenyente Norbu. Featuring appearances by Bernardo Bertolucci and Steven Seagal. *Zeldler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Feb 20-23 (7pm)*

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Along Came Polly (CO, FP) Ben Stiller, Jennifer Aniston, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Debra Messing star in *Safe Men* director John Hamburg's romantic comedy about a man who must conquer his pathological fear of taking risks after his marriage falls apart and he falls in love with a beautiful but unpredictable new woman.

Barbershop 2: Back in Business (CO) Ice Cube, Cedric the Entertainer, Sean Patrick Thomas and Queen Latifah star in *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* director Kevin Rodney Sullivan's sequel to the hit 2002 comedy, in which Calvin Palmer's independent haircutting business struggles to compete against a ruthless name-brand barbershop chain.

Big Fish (CO, FP) Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Jessica Lange and Helena Bonham-Carter star in *Batman* director Tim Burton's whimsical fantasy about a dying man whose habit of spinning tall tales about his wild adventures as a travelling salesman has always infuriated his hard-headed son. Based on the novel by Daniel Wallace.

The Butterfly Effect (CO, FP, L) Ashton Kutcher, Amy Smart and Ethan Suplee star in writer/directors Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber's sci-fi mindbender about a young man who figures out how to travel back in time to his childhood, and who must return to the past over and over again to repair the disastrous effects his voyages have on his future reality.

Calendar Girls (FP) Helen Mirren and Julie Walters star in *Saving Grace* director Nigel Cole's fish-out-of-clothing comedy, based on a true story, about a group of British women who doff their duds for a calendar and a good cause.

Catch That Kid (CO, FP, L) Kristen Stewart, Corbin Bleu, Jennifer Beals and Sam Roberts star in *World Traveler* director Bart Freundlich's kiddie adventure movie about a 12-year-old climbing enthusiast whose mountaineering skills come in handy when he hatches a wild scheme to finance an operation for his paralyzed father by robbing a high-tech bank.

Cheaper by the Dozen (CO, FP, L) Steve Martin, Bonnie Hunt, Hilary Duff and Piper Perabo star in *Big Fat Liar* director Shawn Levy's domestic comedy about a spectacularly fertile small-town football coach with 12 children whose home life becomes even more chaotic than usual when he takes a job at Chicago's Northwestern University.

Cold Mountain (CO, FP) Jude Law, Nicole Kidman, Renée Zellweger, Kathy Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Natalie Portman star in *The English Patient* director Anthony Minghella's epic, episodic film version of Charles Frazier's novel about a Civil War deserter and his grueling trek back home to the bride he left behind in North Carolina.

50 First Dates (CO, FP, L) Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore, Sean Astin and Rob Schneider star in *Anger Management* director Peter Segal's romantic comedy about a veterinarian who attempts to have a relationship with a girl whose short-term memory loss means he has to get her to fall in love with him every single time they meet.

Ginger Snaps II: Unleashed (FP) Emily Perkins and Tatiana Maslany star in director Brett Sullivan's sequel to the 2001 feminist horror film, in which high school outcast Brigitte Fitzgerald is confined to a rehab clinic, where she must deal with her guilt over killing her lycanthropic sister as well as her own impending metamorphosis into a werewolf.

Girl With a Pearl Earring (CO) Scarlett Johansson, Colin Firth and Tom Wilkinson star in director Peter Webber's somber period film, set in 17th-century Holland, about a young woman who is hired on as a servant in the home of Johannes Vermeer and winds up inspiring one of the master painter's greatest portraits.

The Gospel of John (CO, FP) Henry Ian Cusick, Lynsey Baxter and Stuart Bunce star in *Metrodand* director Philip Saville's Biblical epic, a self-proclaimed "word-for-word" adaptation of the Gospel According to John, focussing on Christ's final hours, his crucifixion and resurrection.

The Last Samurai (CO, FP) Tom Cruise and Ken Watanabe star in *Glory* director Edward Zwick's historical epic about an alcoholic Civil War veteran who travels to Japan to train and modernize the emperor's troops, but decides to switch sides after being exposed to the honour code of the samurai warriors the emperor is determined to wipe out.

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (CO, FP) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Liv Ullmann star in the long-awaited concluding chapter of director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy of fantasy novels about a band of hobbits, trolls, elves, wizards and humans who embark on a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring.

Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World (CO) Russell Crowe and Paul Bettany star in *Witness* director Peter Weir's waterlogged adventure yarn, based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian, in which 19th-century British sea captain Jack Aubrey and ship surgeon Stephen Maturin brave storms and cannon-fire as they pursue a French "super-fragate" from Cape Horn to the Galapagos Islands.

Miracle (CO, FP) Kurt Russell, Patricia Clarkson and Noah Emmerich star in *Tumbleweeds* director Gavin O'Connor's inspirational sports picture about Herb Brooks, the coach who led the



Some movies rely on slow-building word of mouth to lure people into theatres; some hope to do the trick while others rely on massive publicity campaigns complete with television re-runs and music videos. And then there are movies like this one, *Eurotrip*, which promise their hopes on Michelle Trachtenberg's breasts and pray the same energy to put them over the top. The strategy just might work, if the salivating reaction of celebrated weblogger Uncle Gumbo of *whattoexpect* is anything to go by. *Eurotrip* is a sequel to *Eurotrip*, which reads an entry from last month. When we walked into the Palladium 12 for a screening of *Something's Gotta Give*, and discovered *Eurotrip* in the form of the one-sheet for *Eurotrip*. It was all four dates could do to drag us into the theatre and away from the backlot bench-ewiness. *EASILY* the most anticipated film since *Honey* opened nationwide on December 5. And it's rated R!

U.S. hockey team to a memorable upset victory over the Soviets at the 1980 Winter Olympics.

Monster (CO, FP, P) Charlize Theron and Christina Ricci star in writer/director Patty Jenkins's sympathetic biopic about Aileen Wuornos, the troubled woman who in the '80s became known as "America's first female serial killer," and her stunted relationship with her emotionally abused lesbian lover.

Mystic River (CO, FP) Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in *Unforgiven* director Clint Eastwood's moody drama, set in working-class Boston, about three childhood friends whose traumatic memories of the past are revived when one, now a police detective, begins to suspect another of killing the third's daughter. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

Something's Gotta Give (CO) Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Keanu Reeves and Amanda Peet star in *What Women Want* director Nancy Meyers's romantic comedy about a middle-aged rascal who re-evaluates his life-long preference for dating much younger women when he finds himself falling in love with the middle-aged mother of his latest trophy girlfriend.

The Triplets of Belleville (P) Writer/director Sylvain Chomet's unique, nearly wordless animated feature about a clubfooted old woman who enlists the aid of a 1930s vocal trio to rescue her son, a champion cyclist who has been

kidnapped by a gang of sinister hoodlums

21 Grams (CO) Sean Penn, Naomi Watts, Benicio Del Toro and Melissa Leo star in *Amores Perros* director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu's intense, chronologically scrambled drama about three people whose lives are bound together by a sudden, inexplicable tragedy.

Win a Date With Tad Hamilton! (CO) Kate Winsworth, Josh Duhamel and Topher Grace star in *Legally Blonde* director George Lukan's teen comedy about the romantic triangle that arises between a vain Hollywood idol, the small-town checkout girl who meets him through a "win a date" contest and her best friend, who's always had a secret crush on her.

You Got Served (FP) Marques Houston, Steve Harvey and the band B2K star in director Christopher B. Stokes's hip-hop comedy about a pair of friends who must win a street dance competition in order to finance their dream of opening their very own recording studio.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285

FP: Famous Players

GA: Gameau Theatre, 433-0728

L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728

M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212

P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

GARNEAU theatre
872-109 Street - 433-0728

love song to sex,
the 60's
"SEDUCES
IDEAS"
sexuality
SCANDALOUS
years ago

DREAMERS

THE DREAMERS
Nightly 7:00 & 9:20 pm
Sat Sun & Mon Matinee 2:30 pm
R

PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

"BEST FILM OF THE YEAR!"

MONSTER

THE REPUBLIC OF LOVE
Nightly 7:00 & 9:00 pm
Sat Sun & Mon Matinee 2:30 pm
14A (sexual content)

PRINCESS THEATRE
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

"A TOUR DE FORCE... THE STORY IS TOO BIZARRE AND WONDERFUL TO SUMMARIZE... STUNNED NEARLY TO BREATHING WITH THE RUSH OF SKYDIVING!"
SEE THIS CURIOUS AND CAPTIVATING FILM NOW!
\$5.00 THE NEW YORK TIMES

★★★★★!
"THE YEAR'S BEST ANIMATED MOVIE!"
—*THE NEW YORK TIMES*

★★★★★!
"GIVES YOU THE RUSH OF SKYDIVING!"
—*THE NEW YORK TIMES*

★★★★★!
"AUDIENCES WILL GO BANANAS!"
—*THE NEW YORK TIMES*

THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE
Nightly 7:10 & 9:10 pm
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm
PG

Empire Building
DOWNTOWN
10117-101 Street
425-6151

Zenaris
on 1st

LIVE JAZZ

dinner
drinks
downtown

8pm til
Midnight*

Friday, February 20th...

John Goodwell Trio

Featuring all new
artwork by artist
Phil Alain

For more info
and menu, log onto
www.zenaris.com

FILM LISTINGS

Shorttimes for Friday, February 20 to Thursday, February 28

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

GARNEAU

7171 9th St. W. 436-4300

PRINCESS

7171 9th St. W. 436-4300

THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE

Daily 7:10 9:10 Sat Sun 2:00

MONSTER

Sequel violence, coarse language. Daily 7:00 9:20 Sat Sun 2:30

METRO CINEMA

9628-101A Ave. Citadel Theatre, 425-8212

WORDS OF MY PERFECT TEACHER

Fri/Mon 7:00

THE EYE

Mon 9:00

GLOBAL VISIONS WHAT'S UP DOC SERIES: FUTURE VISIONS

Thu 7:00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, St. Winston Churchill Ave. 436-8621

The shorttimes listed are for the date of this issue, Thu, February 19 only. Please contact theatre for shorttimes.

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Sequel, lightning scenes. Daily 1:30 7:10

METUEN

Sat 12:45 2:10

ALONG CAME POLLY

Sequel content. Daily 7:15 9:15

THE PERFECT SCORE

Sequel violence, coarse language. Daily 7:00 9:00

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

Sat 1:00 3:30

CATCH THAT KID

Daily 1:15 3:15 7:30 9:30

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Daily 1:15 3:15 7:30 9:30

LEDUC CINEMAS

4702-50 St. W. 436-4300

CATCH THAT KID

Sat 7:10 Sat Sun 1:10

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Daily 7:00 9:20 Sat Sun 1:00 3:30

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Daily 9:15 Sat Sun 3:10

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

Sequel violence. Daily 7:05 9:25 Sat Sun 1:05 3:30

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Daily 7:20 9:20 Sat Sun 1:20 3:20

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS

1171 2nd St. W. 436-4300

MIRACLE

Sat 9:25 Sat Sun 1:00 3:40

CATCH THAT KID

Sat 7:20 Sat Sun 1:15 3:20

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Daily 9:30

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Daily 7:10 9:20 Sat Sun 1:10 3:30

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

Daily 7:00 9:15 Sat Sun 1:00 3:20

PAYCHECK

Sequel violence. Daily 9:25

CINEPLEX OASIS CINEMAS

8800-101A Ave. 436-4300

CINEMA GUIDE

CITY CENTRE

10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

ALONG CAME POLLY

Sequel content. Fri/Tue 12:50 9:50

BIG FISH

Not recommended for young children. Daily 12:40 3:30 7:10 10:10

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Daily 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:15

MIRACLE AND COMMANDER

Sequel violence. Daily 12:20 3:20 6:30 9:35

21 GRAMS

Fri/Tue 3:50 6:50

GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

Daily 1:00 4:10 6:35 9:00

MYSTIC RIVER

Coarse language. Fri/Sun 12:30 3:25 6:40 9:40

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Daily 1:10 3:40 7:00 9:20

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

No passes. Daily 1:20 4:00 7:20 10:00

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Daily 1:40 4:20 7:40 10:20

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Wed/Thu 12:50 3:50 6:50 9:50

STARSKY AND HUTCH

No passes. Sneak preview. Sat 7:15

WEST MALL 8

8802-170 St. 444-1331

LOST IN TRANSLATION

Fri/Mon/Thu 7:20 9:40 Sat/Sun 2:20 4:40 7:20 9:40

HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG

Sequel content. Daily 9:20

LOVE ACTUALLY

Sequel content. Fri/Mon/Thu 6:30 9:10

PETER PAN

Fri/Sat 6:35 Sat/Sun 1:35 4:00 6:35

PAYCHECK

Sequel violence. Fri/Mon/Thu 8:50 Sat/Sun 4:10 8:50

CITY OF GOD

Violence, coarse language throughout. Daily 9:00

THE COOLER

Sequel content. Violence. Fri/Mon/Thu 7:00

THE PERFECT SCORE

Sequel violence. Fri/Mon/Thu 6:40 Sat/Sun 2:00 6:40

THE BIG BOUNCE

Fri/Mon/Thu 7:30 9:50 Sat/Sun 1:50 4:15 7:30 9:50

WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON

Fri/Mon/Thu 6:50 9:30 Sat/Sun 1:30 3:40 6:50 9:30

CLAREVIEW

8802-170 St. 444-1331

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, lightning scenes. Fri/Sun 12:50 4:50 8:50

COLD MOUNTAIN

Daily 9:20

ALONG CAME POLLY

Sequel content. Fri/Sun 1:50 4:10 7:10

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Fri/Sun 12:40 3:30 7:00 9:30

CATCH THAT KID

Fri/Sun 12:45 2:50 5:00 Mon/Wed 2:50 5:00

BARBERSHOP 2: BACK IN BUSINESS

Sequel violence. Daily 9:50

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Fri/Sun 1:40 4:00 7:20 9:40 10:10

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

No passes. Fri/Sun 1:20 3:50 6:40 9:10

AGAINST THE ROPES

Sequel violence. Fri/Sun 1:10 3:40 6:30 9:00

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Fri/Sun 12:30 3:30 6:45 9:50

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Fri/Sun 1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 10:00

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON

10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

THE LAST SAMURAI

Gory scenes. Fri/Sun 12:50 5:20 9:10

SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Coarse language, sexual content. Daily 12:40 3:30 6:40 9:30

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Fri/Sun 12:30 3:30 6:45 9:50

THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, lightning scenes. Daily 12:20 4:30 8:50

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

Fri/Tue 12:00 3:30

BIG FISH

Not recommended for young children. Fri/Tue 12:50 3:50 6:50 9:40

ALONG CAME POLLY

Sequel content. Daily 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:20

WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON

Fri/Tue 1:00 4:00

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Daily 2:00 5:10 7:50 10:40

MONSTER

Sequel violence, coarse language. Daily 1:50 4:40 7:20 10:10

MIRACLE AND COMMANDER

Sequel violence. Daily 12:45 3:45 7:00 10:15

CATCH THAT KID

Fri/Wed 1:45 4:15 Sat/Sun 1:45 4:15 7:45

BARBERSHOP 2: BACK IN BUSINESS

Sequel violence. Daily 9:30 9:35

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Fri/Tue 12:30 2:30 3:15 5:00 5:50 6:45 7:30

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

No passes. Daily 1:10 3:50 7:40 10:20

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Daily 12:15 1:15 2:45 4:20 5:30 7:15 8:10 9:50 10:30

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Wed/Thu 12:00 1:00 3:00 4:00 6:45 8:00 9:45

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR

Sequel content. No passes. Sneak preview. Fri 7:30

STARSKY AND HUTCH

No passes. Sneak preview. Sat 7:00

WEST MALL 6

8802-170 St. 444-1331

BROTHER BEAR

Sat/Sun 1:40 3:45

THE SCHOOL OF ROCK

Daily 6:40 9:00

DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT

Sat/Sun 1:50 4:15

HONEY

Daily 7:15 9:30

GOTHICA

Violence, disturbing content. Fri/Mon/Thu 7:30 9:50 Sat/Sun 2:30 4:45 7:30 9:50

MONA LISA SMILE

Fri/Mon/Thu 6:30 9:10 Sat/Sun 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:10

THE HAUNTED MANSION

Frightening scenes. Fri/Mon/Thu 7:00 9:20 Sat/Sun 2:15 4:35 7:00 9:20

CHASING LIBERTY

Fri/Mon/Thu 6:50 9:40 Sat/Sun 2:00 4:25 6:50 9:40

GALAXY CINEMAS & SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 419-2150

THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, lightning scenes. Fri 4:15 8:30

MIRACLE

Sat/Sun 12:00 4:15 8:30 Mon/Thu 8:30

COLD MOUNTAIN

Fri/Sun 12:30 3:15 5:45 Sat/Sun 12:05 3:10 6:30 9:45

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Sequel content. Violence. Fri 4:30 7:00 9:35

CATCH THAT KID

Sat/Sun 12:45

MIRACLE

Fri/Sun 3:00 6:45 9:50 Sat/Sun 12:30 3:30 6:45 9:50

50 FIRST DATES

Sequel content. Fri/Sun 3:15 4:00 6:50 7:30 9:15 9:55

WELCOME TO MOOSEPOORT

No passes. Fri/Sun 1:15 4:00 6:40 9:10 Mon/Thu 6:40 9:10

EUROTRIP

Sequel sexual content. Fri 4:40 7:35 10:05

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Sequel content. Fri/Sat/Sun 1:25 4:30 7:05 9:30

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Wed/Thu 7:00 9:45

NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS

8802-170 St. 444-1331

THE LAST SAMURAI

Gory scenes. Daily 10:00

SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Coarse language, sexual content. Daily 1:10 3:50 6:50 9:50

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, lightning scenes. Daily 3:10 7:30

COLD MOUNTAIN

Daily 12:00 3:20 6:40 9:40

BIG FISH

Not recommended for young children. Fri/Tue 1:30 4:20 7:20 10:05

ALONG CAME POLLY

Sequel content. Daily 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:50 10:15

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

The shape of underthings

Troy O'Donnell and Garrett Ross want you to look at their *Underpants*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Steve Martin's 2002 off-Broadway farce *The Underpants* (an adaptation of a 1910 play by German satirist Carl Sternheim) is the story of Louise Maske, a pretty Düsseldorf housewife who becomes the target of scandal and desire when her underpants fall down during a parade for the king. This premise prompts me to ask cast members Garrett Ross and Troy O'Donnell two important questions right off the bat. First: is it really possible for a woman's underpants to fall down? Was the underwear in 1910 really that poorly made? Did every woman in Düsseldorf constantly live on the brink of public embarrassment? Apparently so. "The underwear at the time was secured with a drawstring," says Ross, who seems to have looked into the matter, "so it was not unheard of that it really could fall down."

Amazing. But surely in this enlightened, sexually liberated modern age, the notion that a woman

could discombobulate every man in the vicinity simply by dropping her underwear seems like a pretty quaint conceit to hang a play on, doesn't it? "I don't know," Ross says. "I mean, a few months ago I was walking down the street and there was a lady with a short skirt who'd accidentally tucked it into her underwear. There were maybe seven of us walking behind her, all shocked and laughing, but none of us had the guts to say anything to her." And then O'Donnell

mentions a scenario any man who lives in an apartment building with a communal laundry room can relate to—the paralysis that sets in when you want to use the dryer but find that it's still full of panties belonging to the girl who used it before you. Even if you muster up the gumption to empty it yourself, it's hard not to feel a little perverted as you do so.

FINE—WE'VE GOT all that talk about underwear out of the way and now I can quiz them about the unusual way their collective, QuickChange Productions, has gone about staging the show. (If you'd rather keep reading about women's underpants falling down, may I suggest you take a look

at Celery + Gravity = Art, a website at www.lileks.com/institute/frahm that pays tribute to '40s pinup artist Art Frahm and hilariously dissects his bizarre obsession with falling female underwear.) Whereas most collectives are happy if their shoestring budgets are enough to get them through a couple of weeks' worth of performances in one city, QuickChange decided to play *The Underpants* in two separate runs in both Vancouver and Edmonton.

"The script was discovered by Tracey Power, who's a Grant MacEwan grad who now lives in Vancouver," says O'Donnell, absently stroking the impressive new mustache he's grown to play Theo, Louise's boorish, chauvinistic husband. "She got in touch with us and said she wanted to work in Edmonton more. And as we talked about it, we decided a good way to approach it would be on two fronts—she'd co-ordinate the Vancouver stuff, we could co-ordinate the Edmonton stuff and we'd get twice as much work done while attacking two markets simultaneously."

"But doing two cities still seems like the logical thing to do," Ross says. "I don't know why more people don't do it. You end up covering your costs in the first city and by the time you do it in the second city, all



Tracey Power goes topless in the second act of *The Underpants*

the sets and costumes are paid for and it doesn't cost anywhere near as much to put the show up."

"If you look at the budget," O'Donnell says, "it's a lot steeper than any co-op I've ever been with, but if you divide everything by two, all of a sudden it seems pretty reasonable.... The tricky thing was figuring out where everybody would stay. There was a lot of floor camping going on."

THE SITUATION sounds pretty similar to the one in *The Underpants*—soon after Louise's inadvertent striptease at the parade, her apartment fills up with infatuated male boarders who hope to woo her away from the unro-

manic Theo. "She's been kept down and repressed in this marriage," O'Donnell says, "and it's only now that she starts to get a taste of other worlds and see what's possible."

"You spend the play kind of hoping she'll cheat on her husband," Ross says. "I always feel a little funny doing this play—you hope she'll be immoral. It just seems like such a strange thing to be hoping for." ●

THE UNDERPANTS

Directed by Chris McGregor • Written by Steve Martin • Starring Tracey Power, Troy O'Donnell and Garrett Ross • Catalyst Theatre (8529-103 St) • To Mar 6 • 420-1757



Spy in the house of love

Voyeuristic dance romance *Trading Hearts* doesn't reward our curiosity

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

There are two plays going on at once inside *Trading Hearts*, a quirky foray into dance drama by Northern Light Theatre. At times, the piece seems to be nothing more than a playful look at the frustrations and misunderstandings and annoyances that plague any relationship—those tiny habits and personality quirks that hardly matter at all when things are going well but which seem hugely aggravating when things are going

poorly. Probably anyone can relate to the petty arguments that erupt between the unnamed man and woman in *Trading Hearts* (played by Anita Miotti and choreographer Brian Hansen) over matters as minor as her refusal to shave her legs, the fact that she thinks his friends are shallow or his habit of practising his saxophone while she's trying to study.

But there's a darker, more alienating undercurrent to this play as well. Not only is the woman plagued by dark memories of some vaguely defined, long-ago incident of sexual abuse, but a pyjama-clad "Voyeur" (played by playwright and NLT artistic director Trevor Schmidt) keeps staring intently at them through his binoculars from the apartment across the way and making dire predictions about how the couple is doomed to heartbreak and loneliness. Like the two lovers, the two halves of *Trading Hearts'* script get along fine for a while, but they just can't work out their differences and eventually turn out to be incompatible.

Part of the problem may be the hand-me-down feel to a lot of the situations—they're the kind of scenes that seem familiar not because we've actually lived through them but because we've seen them played out by rote on so many TV shows: the woman working up her nerve for a "big talk" with her lover by practising various conversational tacks in front of a mirror; the guy getting bored stiff (in this case, literally) by a cultural

event the girl has dragged him to see; the way we can tell the couple is unhappy because they sleep facing away from each other. It's hard to understand why the Voyeur gets so wrapped up in the activities of such a generic, unremarkable couple—wouldn't he rather watch *Eliminate?*

I'M BEING FLIP, of course, but the Voyeur really is a tough guy to figure out. At times, he seems genuinely, passionately obsessed by the fate of these two people, almost as if he has a personal stake in their staying together.

REVEUE THEATRE

er, as if he's working out some kind of past heartbreak through their story (or at least the emotions he projects onto it). But at other times, as he discusses the couple with the audience, his attitude becomes detached, ironic, even flip. For a while, it seems as though he's implicating the audience in his own voyeurism, encouraging us to become peeping Toms along with him as we secretly watch this couple's most private moments. But in some scenes, the man and the woman start talking to us too, as if they knew we were there all along. I'm not even sure if the Voyeur is supposed to be gay or straight—he certainly works himself into a lather at one point when the woman does a particularly provocative leg stretch, but then again, I don't know many straight guys who wear a

red satin sleeping mask to bed the way the Voyeur does.

Still, Schmidt almost makes the conceit work simply on the strength of his own stage presence. Schmidt rarely acts these days, but whenever I've seen him do staged readings of his own monologues at Springboards or *Urban Tales*, he's always a mesmerizing performer. He's equally entrancing here; narrating the action in his insinuating voice as he slinks barefoot around the stage, he's like a serpent in the Garden of Eden. The long-legged Miotti (she's like a stretched-out version of Annie Dugan) has an anxious, jittery quality that works well for the woman, but neither she nor Hansen are very expressive vocally, and their performances also suffer from some uninspired choreography (especially the clichéd lovemaking duet that closes the first act) and banal musical selections (mostly watered-down funk, jazz and classical pieces).

I do respect the spirit of love and experimentation that went into this piece, though, and I feel as bad writing an unenthusiastic review of the results as I would telling a nice girl I'm not in love with her. Can we just say we went out, we didn't hit it off and leave it at that? ●

TRADING HEARTS

Directed by Nikki Loach • Written by Trevor Schmidt • Starring Brian Hansen, Anita Miotti and Trevor Schmidt • The Third Space (11516-103 St) • To Feb 22 • 471-1586

Toward the end of one of Montreal choreographer José Navas's recent works, a trio of masked dancers who have been frolicking in an enormous bed of red feathers finally remove their loincloths—whereupon the house lights come up and we in the audience find the naked dancers suddenly staring back at us. The sense of erotic confrontation, the challenge to our secret puritan from Navas's use of full-frontal nudity, is unmistakable. There's something a bit naive yet potent about Navas's provocation; it feels in keeping with the youthful flaunt ingrained in the work.

Daniel Léveillé, also from Montreal, is older than Navas and perhaps a little wiser too. Though the quartet of dancers in his piece *Amour, Acide et Noix* (or *Love, Acid and Nuts*) are young, presumably sexually vital people, any sense of the tease, of shock, of desire to lash out at the audience, has been cast aside along with their clothing. The entirety of *Amour, Acide et Noix* is delivered on a bare stage by four utterly bare bodies which only occasionally come into contact. The length of time we are allowed to examine these bodies alone ensures that something more than titillation is going on.

Léveillé, who identifies with Boris Charmatz, the French choreographer who largely disregards the sex of the dancers, is concerned with vulnerability, self-knowledge and the difficulties of aloneness, forgoing sexual posturing in his exploration of the naked body. He speaks of stealing the naked body back from advertising and other mediums of exploitation. He refers to the dancer's skin as their real costume." The reference is somewhat confusing: by costume, does he mean disguise? Are they hiding under their skin or are they exposed by it? The truth, which lies in every tiny twitch and anatomical detail, seems to combine both.

I spoke with Léveillé over the phone on Monday morning. He initially said very little and felt distant, but soon exuded a warmth and thoughtfulness when articulating the ideas and feelings behind his work. Like his dancers, he allowed himself to be very vulnerable with a stranger, to get to the meat and bone of the topic at hand.

Vue Weekly: Nudity, or nakedness if you will, has played an essential and multifaceted role in the history of the visual arts, yet it's often considered novel, gimmicky, problematic or controversial in the performing arts. I imagine you must be making a very conscious decision to choreograph work specifically to be performed without clothes.

Daniel Léveillé: The thing is that when I began creating the piece the nudity wasn't actually planned; that came only about a month before the premiere. When I was working with the dancers I had asked them to wear very little clothing because I felt I needed to see the body, and then at one point I asked them to try doing a rehearsal naked. Though there are four dancers, the piece is mainly built on solos and duets, so everybody could see the others, and it became very clear that this was the only way to go. It was amazing because you think it's going to be more shocking or whatever,

ON THE COVER



Undress for success

Choreographer Daniel Léveillé sheds more than inhibitions for all-nude *Amour, Acide et Noix*

By JOSEF BRAUN

er, but really it's the opposite. The nudity simply brings us more fragility.

VW: So once that decision was made, did it help to concretize the piece?

DL: It gave us orientation, I think. We've been doing this piece for three years now and I've come to refer to the nudity as the costume of the piece. I think that the real costume of a human being is the skin. One critic wrote about *Amour* that the body of the dancer became like a face, where we can read all those details that form a personal expression. And we also read what's under the skin. You can see the organs function, actually—it's amazing. Of course when you go see the piece you initially spend five minutes checking out what sort of equipment you're going to have in front of you for an hour, but that goes away and you're left with this freedom to get past that and

see something deeper. You're given the permission to really look. And the limits of what you can see there is really up to the viewer, I think.

VW: Your description of the show seems to focus on youth and vulnerability. Is the piece somehow a reflective one for you, looking back

PREVIEW DANCE

on the past, on your own youth?

DL: Yeah, sure. There's this one moment in the piece where the music of Led Zeppelin is played, and the sound is really, really low, so that you can just barely hear it. And it was a way to put myself, my generation—I'm 51—into the piece. I'm teaching also [at the University of Quebec in Montreal] so I'm always surrounded by young people, and I

don't have a mirror in front of me, so I feel with them, I have the rage. I find that the will, the energy and the questions of youth are very essential to my creativity.

VW: We've talked about the nudity, which is something that always comes up with *Amour*, but from what I've read about it, it strikes me that a much bigger taboo being courted here is in fact the stillness.

DL: That's true, but you know, the stillness is quite full in that the less the dancers do, the more you have a chance to really see them. I'm quite aware that you ask a lot from an audience when you ask them to focus on such detail, but this is something that I've been working on... well, since the beginning of my career, really. It's a good way to see what the interpreter is working on instead of just throwing his body around the space. Most of

the time this stillness is the preparation for a jump, for example; they're getting their energy cranked [he makes a cranking sound] and then boom! They explode.

VW: So often, the choreographer as magician wants to disguise that preparation. It can be uncomfortable, is the assumption

DL: Yes, but in this piece I think that rather than be uncomfortable, you're actually attracted by the mistakes because you're allowed to see. There are, let's say, 1,000 jumps in the show and probably one or two are not perfectly executed and one of the dancers will have to put a hand on the floor for balance. And for me it just shows a humanity. At one point you will fall. To expect dance to be performed perfectly, with no mistakes—it's fascism. If you do a mistake, you just need to keep going. We have a rule that you don't correct yourself. And they can't hide, anyway: they're naked. Someone in the audience is seeing everything you do. It takes a lot of humility to be a dancer in this piece

VW: *Amour* seems designed to isolate the individuals, with the rare moments of contact emphasizing the fact: Is loneliness something that you're close to as a choreographer, something accessible and expressible?

DL: Actually, I'm a very lonely person. I need a huge amount of loneliness. I can only be working or teaching for four or six hours everyday if I have eight or 10 hours alone. I've been living alone for many years now because of this. And I feel that it's extremely rich. As you grow old it might look sad, but loneliness is actually a resource once you accept it. It's a gift, being with yourself. But *Amour* features young people, and when you're young I think you just need others, you can't stay alone for a long time. It's tough. So when they make contact, that hardness softens just a little bit. When choreographing this duets, I would always ask them to start by just placing a hand on one part of the body, to feel the experience of the connection. You're not one now; you're two. And everything changes.

VW: I remember Leonard Cohen once said that the real attraction to the other—to sexual contact, in his case—was the loss of one's awareness of self.

DL: Yes, in this piece when the dancers are alone they are really themselves up there. But when they touch another the entire dynamic and all their concentration shifts away from the self. That's absolutely right.

VW: Critics have emphasized the simplicity of the choreography in *Amour*. Is this a direction you find yourself moving toward, away from flamboyance and toward a more austere exploration of basic body mechanics?

DL: After 20 years of choreography, there's a lot of things I have done, a lot of things I don't want to go back to. So the only door I see left to go through is the one of increasing simplicity. Probably by the time I die there will be only one thing left. [He laughs.] Very Zen, I guess. ●

AMOUR, ACIDE ET NOIX

Choreographed by Daniel Léveillé •
Performed by Daniel Léveillé Danse •
John L. Haas Theatre (10045-156 St.) •
Fri-Sat, Feb 20-21 • 420-1757



Margie Gillis channels Isadora Duncan for festival of female choreography

By KATHY OCHOA

"In Canada I'm known as this phenomenon, but in the States I'm more known as a great choreographer." It sounds like boasting, but Margie Gillis says these words so factually, you know it isn't arrogance but simple truth.

Gillis is the Montreal-based dance artist who rose to fame throughout Canada with her passionate, highly personal and gestural solo work, usually accompanied only by her famous long, flowing mane. You could call her a contemporary

Canadian version of Isadora Duncan, the legendary dancer whose striving for freedom of expression lay the foundations of contemporary dance as we know it today. And in much the same way that Duncan unraveled uptight Victorian attitudes with her naturalist, chiffon-flowing dance, Gillis's fierce feminine romanticism has made her the first modern dancer to earn the Order of Canada and landed her prestigious role as cultural ambassador for both Quebec and Canada.

Alberta Ballet has commissioned this strong, Canadian female artist to create a new work as part of their upcoming collection of new dance, *Arias*. The content of *Arias* is perhaps not as shocking as the sight of Duncan dancing naked in forests (and conceiving illegitimate children with countless men everywhere she toured), but for the traditionally, neo-classical Alberta Ballet company, *Arias* is certainly showcasing something rare.

The show presents the premieres of four new works created by Gillis, Lorraine Chapman, Sabrina Christine Matthews and Emily Molnar—all of them, if you hadn't noticed, women. Devoting a full night to female ballet choreographers is extraordinary for the Canadian, if not international, ballet world and

celebrates a whole new wave of possibilities opening up for women not just as dancers and muses but as creators of ballet in their own right.

I ask Gillis if this bold step for gender equality in the normally male-dominated ballet arena was creating an extra stir in the studio, but she says she's personally not so interested in the gender debate. "I pay no attention to it," she replies. "I get bored and walk away because I can." She's the first to admit, however, that she's in a fortunate position, working prolifically in modern dance, a form that's always remained distinct from ballet in that it was pioneered by women and in which women's presence continues to thrive.

GILLIS IS FOCUSED instead on the work, and she's more than eager to lavish praise on her talented peers.

"Emily's work is a total masterpiece of dance," she says, "an exciting physical work that just flies through the air. Sabrina is this extraordinary new light on the choreographic scene, creating dance I just haven't seen before. With Lorraine's work, it's the humor, the whimsy and the sense of exploration that makes her vision stand out."

Gillis's own work, "Rivers Without Bridges," will undoubtedly stand out as well because it's not the typical solo à la Margie, but rather a work for 16 dancers. And neither is it ballet, but an unabashed plunge into modern dance, bare feet and all. "Yes, the work is physically modern," Gillis says, "but I admit it's actually a group of solos. There are 16 dancers in the piece and I see them as all unique artists, each with their own treasure trove of unique experiences."

And besides, Gillis remains unconcerned as to whether her art is classified as ballet or contemporary, male or female, but rather, as she puts it, "whether or not these personal experiences translate well on the stage.... It's beautiful in the cathartic sense—and it's this experience which the audience can share." ●

Presented by Alberta Ballet • Jubilee Auditorium • Fri-Sat, Feb 20-21 • 451-8000

Not settling for Les

Les Graff thinks galleries need to do more to serve artists and the community

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

I love art. I love its colours and textures, its pagan sensuality and the way it relates intimate secrets that are much too private to share with words. What I don't love, however, are most art galleries. These are intimidating spaces with hospital-white interiors flanked by uniformed "prison guards" and cameras that follow your every move as your footsteps echo across the floor. The only "welcoming" touches are the curatorial panels—now *de rigueur*—that reduce the mysteries of art to dreary academic dissertations. To see a poignant artwork displayed in this sterile environment is like seeing a love letter corrected for spelling mistakes.

Graff may be one of the most informed people in Edmonton to question the role of art galleries. He's seen them from every angle: as an exhibiting artist, as a curator, as a board member of the Edmonton Art Gallery and as the head of a funding institution. After 40 years in the arts, Graff has amassed observations that he shares with blunt, unsentimental candour. "I had a 31-year history in dealing with art galleries," he says. "By the time I left the government, I felt they were anachronisms in today's world. They deal strongly with the past, the same way as museums; protecting the item is more important than understanding it.... You could hold an exhibition in a barn and have a better audience than at a traditional art gallery. We take for granted the big institutions. They sit there." The sim-



ple solution Graff proposes is to create a series of decentralized, affiliated gallery spaces throughout the city. This way, art could come to the people rather than the other way around.

The administrative organization of public galleries could use some thorough reconfiguring, according to Graff. Currently, galleries are driven by administrative minds. "Previous board members are selecting board members,

not the rank and file of membership," he explains. The membership and the community are merely the scaffolding for public institutions; their input is negligible. "You have to generate community spirit," Graff says. "[The EAG] is not a community organization; it's a community institution using organizational trappings for its legal identity. Most galleries are suffering from the same thing."

THE DIMINISHED ROLE of the individual artist is another issue Graff would like to see galleries address. "Galleries are driven by curators," he says. "The artist is fodder for a curatorial philosophical position." This

top-down system turns the artist into a commodity, one who has to fit into the curatorial theme of the day. While artists serve the institution, institutions feel no responsibility to the individual artist. "When I was with Alberta Culture, not once did an organization go to bat for the individual artist," Graff says. "But artists were often asked to lobby the government on behalf of the organization." He proposes an elegantly simple solution: "The curator's voice is important," he says. "But it's only one of the important voices regarding art. There are community voices, voices of the artists. Some of the shows could be artist-driven."

While Graff relies on years of administrative experience to quietly uncover the moss that has grown over our galleries, he is striving for change as an individual artist. "Exhibiting in the Gramophone is making a cultural statement," he says, "a statement about things that are meaningful in a cultural sense. Music is important. I want to be associated with that kind of dynamic. It's as simple as that—and it's a damn sight more exciting." ●

LES GRAFF

The Gramophone • To Mar 30



theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Regarding Henrik

The Vile Governess and Other Psychodramas • Varscona Theatre • Feb 19-Mar 6 • preVUE Psychodramas don't get much more psycho than *Sinners Three*, the delirious short play that ushers audiences into the world of *The Vile Governess and Other Psychodramas*. The play opens with Leona Brausen (playing Waltraute Krebs, a morbid aristocrat in 1923 Vienna) walking onstage carrying an empty vase and intoning the immortal words, "Vase! Vase! I faint would smash thee!" And then things really get melodramatic.

"It's just so thrilling," says writer/director Stewart Lemoine about the prospect of remounting the show

for the first time since the hit 1987 production that traveled to Toronto and snagged a pair of Dora Mavor Moore Awards for Lemoine and actress Marianne Copithorne in the process. "Some people saw Leona for the first time in these plays—certainly in Toronto they did. For the longest time, our calling card in Toronto was the lights coming up on Leona going, 'Vase! Vase!' There's just nothing like it. Leona barely even had to look at her script again for this production—I think the lines are just so insane that you can't ever forget them."

Three of the actors from that original production—Brausen, Copithorne and Davina Stewart—will recreate their roles for the remount, but one of the "other psychodramas" won't be returning with them. "The show used to include something called *The Bad and the Sick*," Lemoine says, "which was a romantic comedy about a brother and sister who were in love. There was incest and cocaine and morphine addiction and various other things that went on in that one. But we didn't drop it because we thought audiences would find it disturbing or shocking. The problem was that there was a lot of chain-smoking in it—[actress] Jane Spidell used to have five different cigarettes going at the same

time in various parts of the room—and I don't think you can do that anymore. People can't stand smoke, and they start to cough in their seats. You'd have to post warnings outside the theatre—'Warning: Smoking!' It's strange—you don't have to go, 'Warning: Incest! For Fun!' That's no problem at all."

The Bad and the Sick has therefore been placed by a new, nicotine-free Lemoine play (his only new work of the season) entitled *A Widow's Crimes*, whose low-key brand of Thomas Mann suffering Lemoine hopes will provide a nice counterpoint to the heavy-duty Ibsenesque drama of *Sinners Three* and *The Vile Governess*. "[That style of theatre] really requires you to go for broke," Lemoine says. "There's a lot of intensity, and yet it's rooted in a lot of formal language. You need to have good posture and know how to speak well. So it also requires the actor to show some control and a certain level of restraint—you have to make a lot of decisions as to what the degree of the build is, and how quickly your character is going insane. It's a fairly unhinged comedy, but you need a great deal of classical technique to pull it off. If you ham it up in the wrong way, the audience tends to recoil." ●

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listing@vuc.bc.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

AMOUR, ACIDE ET NOIR John L. Haas Theatre, 10445-156 (426-1757) • Choreographed by Daniel Léveillé • Presented by the Brian White Dance Company • Feb. 27-28 (8pm) • \$25 (adults/\$15 student/senior) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

ARAS Julie's Auditorium, 11455-87 Ave (426-6819/451-8000) • New works created by four choreographers: Marie (Canadian contemporary dance), Lorraine Chapman (Houston based), Emily Morley (Ballet British Columbia soloist), and Christine Matthews (Alberta Ballet) • Feb. 30-31 (8pm) • Tickets from \$18.10-\$58.10 • Tickets available at Alberta Ballet, TicketMaster

BOWLES AND COMPANY 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Glassworks by several BC and Alberta artists including Mark Cibeau, Arne Vargas and Marco de Vique. Paintings by Angela Grootelaar, Lisa Lepp and Kathryn Swerman • **Hotel MacDonald**: Acrylic paintings by Steve Mitts • **Bedford Tower Lobby**: Oil Paintings by Audrey Plummer • **Scotia Place Lobby**: Watercolours by Daniel Vary-Arson • **Bull Tower Lobby**: Paintings by Lucie Francis, Arne Vargas and Clenda Beaver • Glass art by Arne Vargas, Mark Cibeau, Carol Jane Campbell and Marcia de Vique • Through March

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **POTPOURRI**: Landscape and floral watercolours by Robert Sinclair • Until Feb. 24

SEAGERS STUDIO GALLERY 6th Fl. North Tower, 10030-107 St, Seventh Street Plaza (425-6865) • Open Tue-Thu 5:30-9pm or by appointment • Artworks by David Seagers, Robert von Eschen, Eric Butterworth, Bianca Khan, Linda Mainer, Neil McClelland, Jacquelyn Mulyk, Kevin Beck • Through February

INHERIT THE WIND Leduc Performing Art Centre, 4306-50 St, Leduc (987-0278) • Presented by the Leduc Drama Society • Fred Kong directs Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee's theatrical chrestid, a fictionalized version of the celebrated 1925 Scopes "monkey trial" • Feb. 19-21, 26-28 (8pm) • \$8 (Thu/\$10 (Fri, Sat) • Tickets available at Black Gold Service Centre, Leduc Public Library

KABOOM! FESTIVAL La Cité Francophone, 8627 Rue Mare Anise Cabour (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Until Feb. 21 • Workshop West's annual festival of new Canadian plays. Springboard: staged readings of hot new Canadian plays currently in development (Feb. 19-21) • \$18 (adults/\$15 student/senior) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

ON SUSANNA! The Vancoara Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-9139) • The crew of the pirate ship Sunny sets sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure packed with music, swordfights and mermaids • Until May 9 Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Dassi Entertainment Hotel, 11301 Fort Rd (448-9139) • The crew of the pirate ship Sunny sets sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure packed with music, swordfights and mermaids • Until May 9 Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Dassi Entertainment Hotel, 11301 Fort Rd (448-9139) • The crew of the pirate ship Sunny sets sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure packed with music, swordfights and mermaids • Until May 9 Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

SURVIVAL: THE IMPROVISATION GAME The Third Space, 11510-103 St (426-6304) • Live, competitive improvisational comedy with "an element of danger" • Feb. 27 • \$5 • Tickets available at the door

THEATRESPOTS Vancoara Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-9139) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-1174/88-5900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **WIND CHILL -40 C OR WINNER** WOMEN: Women's mixed media show, until Mar. 27 • **Discover Gallery: DIVERSION**: Metal artworks by Roseanne Jansen and glass artworks by Fern Jordan, until Feb. 21

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St, Anne St, St. Albert (459-3679) • Paintings by gallery artists, glassworks by Jeff Holmwood and Anne Gaudin. Prints by Brian Hubner and Tod • Until Feb. 22

ARTS+BAR STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Knol Building, 11710-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Arne Pederson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swan, Anne Sui, Eugene Ussad and guests

CHRIST BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 5612-82 Ave (439-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • A VIEW TO UNDERSTANDING: Portraits by Christ Bergstrom, until March

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-2231) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm, Thu 10:30am-5pm, Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **MAXWELL BATES**: Art of the CROSSROADS OF EXPRESSIONISM, Feb. 21-Apr. 18, "vectors" Tour: Sat, Feb. 21 (1pm, 2pm) • **GOZULEVA VS. KATE ROBERTS**, until Feb. 22 • **KIM ADAMS AND DAVID HOGAN**, until Feb. 22 • **CRACK LIPS**: Landscapes from THE JORDN, until Feb. 22 • **ART FOR LUNCH**, EAG Theatre, until Feb. 26 • **AFTER DARK**: Featuring music by the Bomba • Mile Zero Dance presentation of Gerry Motta's House • A contemporary dance performance, a gallery tour of **Robert Bates**, *At the Crossroads of Expressionism*, Sat, Feb. 28, 11 • **Children's Gallery: SPELBOUND**, until Jan. 2005 • 12:15 (10 student/senior), 5 (children 6-12/free member) • Children 5 and under

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **MINE SITES**: Photographic printworks by Steve Dixon, until Mar. 13; opening reception: Thu, Feb. 19 (7-9pm) • **SHAPPI SATURDAY**: Video Monographs, family program, Sat, Feb. 28 (1-4pm) • 5 (chld) (free accompanying adult)

SHOWBIRD GALLERY WLM, 8882-70 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Vardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim West, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

SPECTRUM ART GALLERY AND STUDIO 11745 Jasper Ave (482-6677) • Open daily 10am-6pm • Paintings by Christopher Lucas, Patricia Young, Bridgett Turner, Deanna Larson and David Phillips

STOULERY GALLERY 9702-111 Ave (488-0255) • Open Mon-Thu 10am-2pm, Sat 10am-2pm • Artworks by artists who work alongside the artists with disabilities in the Nina Haggerty Centre studio • Until Mar. 26

STUDIO 321 Rose Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) • Open Sat 1-4pm, Sun 1-4pm • **THE FATHOM-SCEN**: Artworks by Marc Munan and Louis Munan • Until Mar. 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **THE COLLECTIVE**: Artworks by eight artists • Through February

URBAN GRID 10124-124 St (995-5438) • M.A.D.D. ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY: Photographs by Crystal Purn • Until Mar. 1

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-7311) • **PRAIRIE SCAPES**: Landscape paintings and watercolor by Marg Wenger, Mel Stevenson and James Cupido • Until Mar. 20

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226) • Artworks by Edmontonians 12-17 years • Until Feb. 20



AMOUR, ACIDE ET NOIR

Daniel Léveillé Danse

Feb. 27 & 28
8:00 P.M.

LITERARY

AUDREY'S BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Tania MacDonald reads from her book of poetry, *fortune* • Stephen Soble reads from *Alas Bob Dylan Revisited* • Thu, Feb. 19 (7-9pm) • Free

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 201, 10324-82 Ave • I Love Alberta Beat: Beat poetry open stage hosted by The Alberta Beatnik • Every Tue (8pm) • Until March 30

CALABASH CAFE 10630-124 St (414-6625) • Every Wed (7-9pm): The Poet's Oeuvre: readings by Local authors

GREENWOODS' BOOKSHOPPE 7925-104 St (439-2005) • Robert Sedack reads from *Hom of the Lamb*, Mar. 23 (7-9pm) • Daniel Coleman reads from *Scots of Islayshire*, Wed, Feb. 25 (7-9pm)

THE MELTING POT 10351 Whyte Ave (454-8287) • *Thaw* Featuring Vancouver spoken word divas T.L. Cowan, Thia Bowring, Barbara Adler • Thu, Feb. 19 (8pm) • \$5 (door)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Roger Chandler: Fri. 19-21 • Stan Hoop, Feb. 26-28

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Improv comedy • Every Sun

HORIZON STAGE 1001 Calahoo Rd, Spruce Grove (962-8995/451-8000) • *Daniel Scheel-Dont Shoot Me, I'm Only the Psycho Player* • A cross between paired comedian Victor Borge and raconteur Peter Ustinov • Sat, Feb. 28 (7-9pm) • \$20 (adults/\$15 (student/senior) • Tickets available at the door, by phone at 962-8995, Horizon Stage box office, TicketMaster

RED'S WEM (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays: With hypnotist Saleh • 9:30pm • Free

STAPLEY & MELMER URBAN THEATRE 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (433-2912/420-1757) • *Living, Laughing and Loving*: Presented by T.A.L.E.S. • Fri, Feb. 20 (7-9pm) • \$10 (adults/\$25 (family package) • Tickets available at door, Tix on the Square 420-1757, T.A.L.E.S.

THEATRE

THE ADMIRABLE CHICHTON Ardrossan Community Theatre (422-2228) • Presented by Ardrossan High School Drama Club • J.M. Barrie's classic farce about the reversal of roles that occurs between aristocratic family and their serving staff when they are all stranded on a desert island • Feb. 20-21 (7-9pm) • \$6 (door/\$16 (Sat dinner theatre, 5:30pm) • Tickets available at the Ardrossan High School

CHIMPPOVI Vancoara Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

DIE-HASTY Vancoara Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meer, Josh Dean, Danna Stewart and Leona Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

ESPRESSO Kassa Theatre, Jubilee Auditorium (420-1757) • Morris Erman directs Lucia Frangione (who also wrote the script) and Todd Thomson in this comedy/drama about three women, all from different generations, all members of the same dysfunctional Italian family, who come together when a car crash threatens to take the life of the man they all love • Feb. 21-Mar. 20, Tue-Sat (8pm), Fri-Sun (3pm) • \$25/\$32 (each for groups of 10 or more) • Tickets available at Tix on the Square 420-1757

HARRY AND SALLY'S WEDDING Jubulations Dinner Theatre, WEM, 882-170 St (484-2424) • Until Apr. 4 • Wed, Thu, Sun: \$46.95; Fri Sat \$56.95; child (12 and under) \$20.05;

Elles Louise Bedard Danse

March 5 & 6
8:00 P.M.

Tickets available at Tix on the Square
(780) 420-1757 www.tixonthesquare.ca

MCAP MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Story Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • First Portland Pottery Guild biennial show, until Mar. 8

MUSEE HERITAGE MUSEUM 5 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm • **INHERIT: IF STONES COULD SPEAK**: Until Apr. 18

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm • **CAPTIVATING COMMOE**: Three lavatories created by Gempert, Nicole Callets, Paul Freeman, until Mar. 5 • **YSTITE**: Artworks by Nicole Callets, Daryl Bydman, Margaret Mitsch, until Mar. • **ADVENTURES**: All Systems Go Part Two: Children 6-12 create mixed media artworks, Feb. 21 (4-6pm)

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-7102) • Open: Sat-Thu 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-5pm • **BIG THINGS** 2: Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop, until Apr. 30 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY**: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • **The Natural History Exhibit**: • **BUG ROOM**: Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY**: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • **A TO Z AT THE MUSEUM**: Every Sat (9am-11am): family-fun drop-in program

EVENTS WEEKLY

Continued from previous page

Edmonton's Cops for Cancer Ironman Team ride for 9 days, until Feb. 21 (9am-9pm) • Fantasyland Hotel Ballroom, WEM (455-7181); Auction and Dance; Silent auction and cocktails (5:30pm), dinner (7pm), live auction to follow, music with the Big Breakfast Boogie Band; Feb. 21, 560/\$500 (table for 10) • Fundraiser for Cops for Cancer

DIRTY DANCING HAVANA NIGHTS! The Gully Martini, 10318-81 Ave • Juan y Juinita dance competition (salsa, tango, cha-cha-cha) Fri, Feb. 20 (8pm, door); \$5 • Dirty Dancing Havana Nights opening night party; Fri, Feb. 27

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm); with Brad Scott

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (464-7751) • Every Thu (9pm); Music Trivia with Escapade Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm); with Escapade Entertainment

BLUE QUILL 326 Saddleback Rd (434-3124) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

BORDERLINE PUB 3226-82 St (462-1888) • Every Thu-Sat (9:30pm)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm); Hosted by Jeannie

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every

CLIFF CLAYVIN'S 9710-105 St (424-1614) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm); with Dee Dee

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave (454-9928) • Every Wed

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (467-4656) • Every Thu-Sat (9pm); with Woody

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed

HILLVIEW PUB 311 Woodvale Rd, W. Millwoods (462-0468) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm)

INGLEWOOD PUB 12402-118 Ave (451-1390) • Every Fri-Sat (9:30pm)

JIMMY RAY'S 15211-111 Ave (486-3390) • Every Sat (9pm)

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed (9pm)

LE'S 23 Alms Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/Thu (9pm)

LEGENDS 6104-162 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

MARK'S BACK PUB 13403 Fort Rd (466-5152) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm); with Shawn the Bomb

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon; with Jennifer (Jamie)

ORLANDO'S 115163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)

ORLANDO'S 1135 09-127 St (451-7799) • Every Wed/Thu (9pm)

OVERLAND RESTAURANT 12960 St. Albert Tr (454-0667) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm); with Big Time Entertainment

ROSARIO'S PUB 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Daily (9pm)

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

ROSE'S BAR AND GRILL DOWNTOWN 10604-101 St (423-9497) • Every Tue-Sat (9pm-1am) with Ruth

ROSE'S BAR AND GRILL HIGHTSTREET 10315-124 St (482-1600) • Daily (9:30pm)

ROSE'S BAR AND GRILL OLD STRATHCONA 10475-80 Ave (439-7211) • Thu, Fri, Sat (9:30pm-1:30am)

SHERLOCK HOLMES 10341-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun (9pm); with Scott

STRATHAIR PUB 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Wed/Fri (9pm)

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am); every Tue (8pm-midnight)

WOODY'S 11725 Jasper Ave, upstairs (488-6636) • Every Sun/Thu (7pm-midnight); with Terrace; every Mon/Wed (7pm-midnight); with Aerie

CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to place your Classified ad in **Vue Weekly** please phone Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

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11018-97 St. \$30.00 Ph: 468-0706.

Salsa Dance Classes, Orange Hall, 84 Ave. 103 St. Starts Mar. 6. All levels plus solo Salsa. Have fun, meet people. Learn a new skill. 471-0846.

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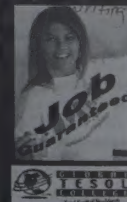
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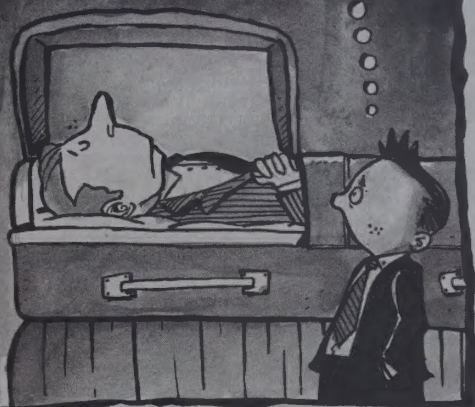
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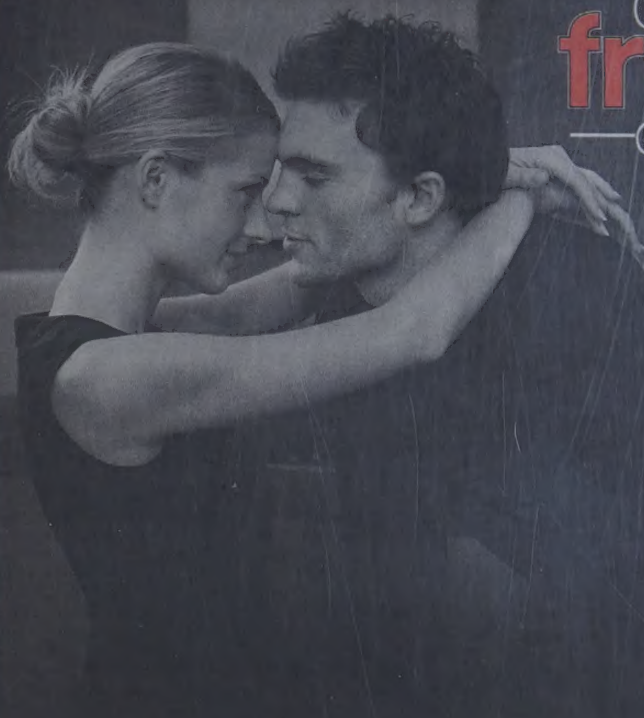
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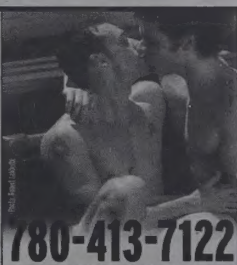


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